# Employing Transgender in Organization: Workplace Discrimination Challenges

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# Preface

The study explores the challenges an organization face when transgender persons are employed. One of the challenges is workplace discrimination issue against the transgender employees. Further, the role of transformational leadership has been examined in dealing with workplace discrimination issues. The study is based on qualitative analysis where in the validity and credibility of the study is ensured using data triangulation i.e. data is collected through unstructured interviews, participant observation and documents & pictures. Also, source triangulation i.e. different categories of respondents included 6 transgender employees, 6 other employees who works closely with transgender employees, 3 HR personnel, and the Executive Director Akhuwat. The study supports the role of transformational leadership in handling workplace discrimination. The values & principles, like respect and brotherhood are the core factors affecting the workplace discrimination against transgender employees. Especially, in absence of formalized HR policies and regulations, the values & principles plays a pivotal role. Such values of brotherhood and respect encourages the employees to hold a non-discriminatory organizational culture. Data shows the transgender employees are more hardworking, motivated, loyal and satisfied for merely being respected and recognized by the organization. This study of transgender employment experiences and the role of transformational leadership opens new lines of inquiry for

understanding gender inequalities at work, and it builds on scholarship that combines political, social and economic approaches with transgender studies.

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# 1. Introduction

The changing nature of workforce diversity in respect of gender identity has made the organizations devise policies for its effective management. Diversity management entails recognition for the workforce differences e.g. individual characteristics, backgrounds, religions, values in order to gain high utilization of individual talents to meet organization goals (Shen *et al.,* 2009). The challenges of workforce diversity are based on race, gender, age, ethnicity, and religion (Kossek, Lobel & Brown 2005). Much research of workforce diversity has been focused on race, ethnicity, and gender (Kossek & Lobel, 1996, p.2) however ignoring the implications of gender identity of the workforce for organizations.

Gender is what we do, not what we are born with (West & Zimmerman, 1987) and sex is biologically assigned at birth based on individual's anatomy, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex (Eckert & McConnell, 2003). Today, definition of gender is not any more restricted to male and female only. There is increasing awareness and recognition of another gender identity i.e. third gender constituting those who identify themselves as transgendered. A transgender person refers

to the one who do not align their gender identity with their assigned sex (Pepper & Lorah, 2008). This refers to those individuals who do not identify themselves with the sex they were assigned at birth. For instance, a biological female identifies herself as a male stuck inside of a female's body. As the study is conducted in Pakistan where locally transgender persons are known as 'khwajasira' thus both the terminologies i.e. transgender and khwajasira are inter-changeable.

When transgender persons become part of the workforce the issues of workforce diversity arise. In many countries across the globe transgender people are socially excluded, economically deprived and emotionally oppressed group of society. As organizations are social structures, multiple challenges may surface upon inclusion of transgender persons in the workforce. A major challenge will be to create acceptability of transgender persons (khwajasiras) among other employees so to mitigate any chances of workplace discrimination. Literature supports a major objective of diversity management as to position the organization clear of any charges of discrimination (Shen *et al.,* 2009).

Discrimination happens when someone is denied equal rights and opportunities because of his/her personal characteristics. A lot has been written on discrimination based on gender issues, however, little is known about discrimination forms and impacts faced by transgender employees. Transgender people are stigmatized and discriminated by society (Pepper & Lorah, 2008) therefore it is eminent to study the measures an organization should undertake to rule out chances of workplace discrimination. Discrimination has long lasting effects on person's psychological and physical health and stress level (King, 2005). Mental illness like anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem are triggered by discrimination (Irwin, 2002; Clements-Nolle *et al.,* 2006; Gainor, 2000). Such conditions thus have severe impact on the workforce performance which is a concern for the organizations.

Based on their sexual orientation, literature discusses transgender people with other minority groups i.e. lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT). However, much attention is given on the issues of discrimination faced by lesbians, guys and bisexuals (LGBs) in the workplace (Chung, 2003; Chung *et al.,* 2009; Lidderdale *et al.,* 2007; Raggins & Cornwell, 2001;

Smith & Ingram, 2004). This endorses more research is needed on discrimination issues concerning the transgender persons.

Recent developments in Pakistan regarding transgender people includes the Supreme Court of Pakistan officially declaring them as third gender locally known as "Khawajasira" and protecting their rights to vote and run for office. Also, the honorable court ordered the transgender persons should be given equal human rights, inheritance rights and equal employment opportunities (EEO). Despite, this minority community is still oppressed and stigmatized desperately fighting for a respectable place in Pakistani society. Their economic reliance is restricted to dancing, singing, begging on the streets and prostitution. The stereotypical conduct of society has reduced them so they are left with no dignified job opportunities. In his article Erin Kilbride (2015) highlighted that in 2009 census transgender people were counted between 80,000 - 300,000 however, exact figure is not mentioned anywhere. Another study gives an estimation of transgender community around 500,000 (Behzan, 2015). Such a significant minority group is forced to live under inhumane economic, social, and health standards.

Now as they are accepted as a separate entity i.e. third gender (known as Khawajasira) in the country, there is growing recognition of bringing improvements in their social, economic, health and education. Akhuwat is an organization that has offered employment to this socially abandoned minority. In the year 2001, Akhuwat initiated provision of interest free loan to the poor to raise their standard of living. Akhuwat is dedicated to improving the lives of the poor; those who are financially abused, abandoned and disregarded by society. "Poor" is defined by 'Akhuwat' as someone who is deprived in any way i.e. socially, economically or emotionally. Transgender people in Pakistan are

deprived and dejected in all above mentioned aspects. Akhuwat decided not to simply render loans to transgender people but to address the issue in a subtle manner so maximum could be gained for the long term benefits of transgender individuals. Transgender people are employed in the organization to not only alleviate their economic poverty but also to build a social and emotional support system for them. Making them have a respectable source of income will have significant impact on their social and emotional uplifting which will be long lasting. Keeping in view the present situation of transgender people in the country, we undertake to study the challenges an

organization face when employs transgender persons. Also, what measures the organization should take to manage workforce diversity so to mitigate chances of any possible discrimination against them at workplace. The purpose of this study is to illuminate issues an organization needs to address to mitigate workplace discrimination transgender people may experience. Workplace discrimination can be multidimensional, or multilayered (Chojnacki & Gilberg, 1994) therefore it is vital to understand what multilayered and multidimensional effects of discrimination the transgender employees face at workplace. Discrimination occur in organization structure, system, policies and practices that can have disdain effect on minority groups in the workplace (Dipboye *et al.,* 2005). Research questions this study has undertaken are: what are the challenges for an organization employing transgender persons? How can an organization address the issue of workplace discrimination upon inclusion of transgender employees?

Again, how the organization deals with discrimination at workplace is determined through its leadership, strategy, policies and practices of human resource, structure (formal and informal), climate and culture (Dipboye *et al.,* 2005). The role of top management is perhaps the most influential aspect in dealing with discrimination. A strong leader who encourage workforce diversity and oppose discrimination will lead by example that employees will follow. This generates our third research question as: what is the role of leadership in dealing with discrimination against transgender employees at workplace?

## Background of the study

Limited scholarly research exists on transgender people specifically those employed in corporate sector of Pakistan. This has enticed the need for studying the subject matter. The selected organization "Akhuwat Foundation" has recently employed transgender people in significant number. The study will highlight the issues of workplace discrimination raised as a result of adding diversity in workforce based on gender identity. This is a unique study in perspective of the Country as transgender people were not given such an opportunity on such a scale by any organization in the past. Also the repercussion of such an inclusion of transgender employees to the organization will be analyzed.

This study relies heavily on five key works: "Purple-collar labour; Emmanual David (2015), "Still Serving in Silence"; Bryant & Schilt (2008), Voice, silence, and diversity in 21st century organizations: Strategies for inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender employees; Özbilgin *et al.,* (2011), and "The dilemmas of workplace discrimination. *Discrimination at work: The psychological and organizational bases; Dipboye, & Colella, (2005).* These studies address various aspects of inclusion of transgender individuals in the main stream in organizations. Highlighting different issues, the transgender employees face in the organizations e.g. health and safety issues, discrimination and harassment, career development etc. Also the issues the organizations need to undertake while devising policies for inclusion.

## Purpose of the study

The study undertaken aims to develop understanding about the transgender employees as well as what policies and procedures the organizations will need to devise if transgender persons are employed. What issues of workplace discrimination are raised after transgender persons are employed in the organization? It will further highlight issues that transgender people face in participating and contributing effectively in the corporate sector of Pakistan, as many countries have equal employment opportunity policies regarding inclusion of transgender persons in organizations.

## Scope

The study undertaken exEmp2es: (1) current directives, policies and practices at Akhuwat Foundation (2) transgender (khwajasira) employees' experiences, problems and issues while working in Akhuwat Foundation (3) use of transgenderism and its historical context.

## Statement of the problem

Transgender people (khwajasiras) in Pakistan are in a significant number. They are deprived of their rights of education, employment, health and security. Number of countries around the globe have not only recognized transgender people accepting them to have a separate gender identity but also have devised policies protecting their rights for education,

employment, health and security. Pakistan is lagging behind in all these aspects.

There is denial in fair and equal treatment of transgender people based on their gender identity. The prejudice and stigma associated with transgender people have restricted them for employment even if they are qualified. It is difficult for society to go against their set values and mindsets to approve of equal rights as declared in the Pakistan constitution for all human beings.

For the first time in Pakistan, transgender people are employed by any organization in a significant number. This has implications for the organization of adding workforce diversity issues. Further it has repercussions of raising issues of workplace discrimination in the organization employing transgender people.

## Significance

This study will be an addition into limited literature found on workplace discrimination faced by transgender employees (Dispenza *et al.,* 2010). None is found in perspective of transgender people working in organization in Pakistan.

This study is exploratory in nature. It intends to support any future research by exEmping currently prevalent directives and policies and practices undertaken at Akhuwat Foundation upon inclusion of transgender employees. Thus, it is anticipated that this study will develop understanding about the origins and outcomes of this complex issue. It will further pave way and clarify the organizations what policies and actions need to be devised when they plan to include transgender employees.

The need for change in labour laws and employment laws will be highlighted. The judicial system may benefit and making amendments in laws keeping in view the results of this study.

The transgender community as a whole will experience an uplift in their economic opportunities as the study will assist the organizations in formulating non-discriminating employment policies.

The definitions, terminologies used in discussions will clarify the misconceptions about transgender people among masses. This study pursues to clarify terminologies which are confused by public at large e.g. sex, gender, and gender identity.

Because of conflicts and discrimination in the workplace, the transgender employees face need of counseling and

psychotherapy (Rachlin as cited in Pepper & Lorah, 2008). The study thus can benefit the career counselors and HR personnel in the organization to understand the factors that contribute towards discrimination and how the transgender employees are affected by it. At large employers, HR personnel and public authorities can benefit from the study. Finally, this study will open doors for future researches to be undertaken on the area.

## Objectives of the Study

To explore the problem of workplace discrimination for an organization employing transgender people

To identify the role of leadership in addressing the issue of workplace discrimination against transgender employees.

## Research Question

What are the challenges for the organization employing transgender persons?

How can an organization address the issue of workplace discrimination upon

inclusion of transgender employees?

What is the role of leadership in addressing the issue of workplace discrimination for transgender employees?

# 2. Literature review

## Transgenderism Defined

Transgendered are defined as inter-sexed people, transsexuals i.e. the people who relate to the gender other than the sex assigned to them at birth. Generally, a transgender person aligns him with the characteristics socially assigned to the opposite sex.

> "Transgender people are those whose gender identity (sense of oneself as a man or a woman) or gender expression (expression of oneself as a man or a woman in behavior, manner, and/or dress) differ from conventional expectations for their physical sex".

Transgender people are not given sufficient recognition in terms of protection of their rights. Transgender people are diagnosed with gender identity disorder (GID) and its definition is as a disability (Human Rights Campaign, 1999d, p.6).

Transgender is a term used to encompass all those individuals who do not align their gender identity and expressions with their biological sex and the norms acceptable for that sex by the society. It includes pre-operative, post-operative and non-operational transsexuals, transmen and transwomen (Fassinger & Arseneau, 2007). Although there is substantial within-group variability in gender expressions among transgender people,

they share in common the adoption of gender expressions that are (perceived to be) discordant with their biological sex. Also, transgender individuals' gender expressions may be independent of their sexual orientation identities (e.g., they may identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual, asexual).

Transgendering includes female-to-male (FTM) and male-to-female (MTF) transitioning as well as non-identification with a particular gender or sex, it includes transvestites, transsexuals, intersexuals, and third genderists.

## History of transgender in South Asia

Transgender people has been acknowledged as *Hijra* in ancient Hindu scriptures. *Hijras* have always been known as the third gender in India. The literature identifies the roots of transgenderism in primitive era where they were devoted to worship the *Bahuchara Mata* (the Mother Goddess). As part of worship they get themselves emasculated and in return the *Bahuchara Mata* blesses them with power to give fertility to infertile people (Nanda, 1999).

Transgender people are found in every part of the world, they are accepted and part of Muslim societies. Mughal times in South Asia mark the presence of transgender known as *khwajasiras* as guards of *harem* (ladies of the Mughals). Transgendered (*Hijra/khwajasiras*) were appointed at *harems* as guardians, protectors and advisors at the princely state of Hyderabad in Mughal Empire (1526 to 1857) (Jaffrey, 1996).

Afterwards, during British rule transgender people' activities as well as their rights of inheritance were restricted by laws like the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 and the Dramatic Performance Act, 1876. Thus, transgendered were removed and debarred from the society (Hoda, 2010). British rulers excluded the *hijras* (transgender) from society calling them menace and sabotage all the security and position they enjoyed during Mughal times.

Since British rule, transgender people have been excluded and isolated from society abandoning them of their rights for shelter, education and health, employment etc. They are subject to worse kind of discrimination, hatred, mockery forcing them to identity crisis and stigmatization from every social class.

Today Pakistan has significant large communities of transgender people (*hijras* or khwajasiras) living under poor condition. These *transgender* communities called as *Chellas* are led by *guru*. Their economic survival is restricted to

dancing at carnivals, weddings and births which now a days has become a declining trend as more novel means of celebrations have been introduced. The only economic choices they are left with are sex work and begging (Tufail, 2006). The future also seems bleak as no concrete step is being taken by the governments for their economic and social uplift.

The UN resolutions regarding equal human rights for transgender communities has brought a ray of hope. Pakistani law amendments (2009) have protected the transgender communities from identity crisis by declaring them as citizens of Pakistan. They are denoted as "khwajasira" in their identity cards and are given equal human rights at par with other genders i.e. male and female. Further, the Chief Justice of Pakistan ordered that khwajasiras be given with respectable job opportunities e.g. engaging them in debt recovery etc. However, the shift in mindsets of society cannot be driven by simple legislations. Khwajasiras are still looked down and scorned by many in the society.

In a census of the transvestites in Pakistan which was carried out by the Social Welfare Department, they came up with about 1500 registrations in Punjab and about 800 in Sindh and over 0.4 million throughout Pakistan (Ashraf, 2010). Recently at February 02, 2012 the Supreme Court has directed the NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority) chairman to resolve the issue regarding registration of people belonging to the third gender and also ordered to make sure that 'fake' transvestites were not registered.

## Challenges faced by transgender persons

Carl Yung (1920-30s) a renowned psychologist viewed that in unconscious and subconscious every male possess some feminine attributes in him, likewise every female endows some male attributes in her. Dr. Harry Klinefelter (1942) suggested a chromosomal nondisjunction in males that results in transgenderism known as Klinefelter's Syndrome (Visootsak, & Graham 2006).

Thus medical science stance on transgenderism was natural occurrence same as a person may get struck by any disease. Therefore punishing someone for the disease he is suffering from is uncalled for and unjustifiable. The psychologists however viewed transgenderism as a mental illness.

Adolph Hitler considered transgender people having incurable illness and during World War 2 ordered his army to abuse and kill them (Hirschfeld, 2006). World War 2 is a significant time for transgender people on one hand they were abused and massacred on the other hand medical science advancement benefited transgender people. Later on, these developments lead to provision of hormonal injections and cosmetic surgery techniques to undertake sex reassignment surgery so that transgender people may get themselves transitioned to a different sex (Friedman *et. al.,* 2006).

Despite all the medical advancement and awareness about the transgenderism and sex reassignment surgery, people at large despised and scorned transgenderism. Transgenderism was confirmed as a mental disorder in 1980 by the American Psychological Association (APA). Globally they were confirmed to suffer from mental disorder. However, this could not bring any soft feeling in public mindset rather people started recognizing them as freaks who are distorting face of social setup. Such behaviors lead to *transphobia.*

Despite all the efforts of raising awareness about transgenderism by UN, governments and organizations the discrimination, violence and hatred still persists supporting transphobia. Severe form of *transphobia* in the form of use, abuse and murder majorly is gone unreported across the globe. In many countries crimes against transgender persons are now being tracked and recorded governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

An NGO Transgender Europe has initiated a project "Trans-respect Versus Transphobia Worldwide", claims that transgender people are victimized throughout the world. Statistically speaking the report says that during 2008-11, 816 transgender persons were murdered across the globe because of their gender identity. However, these are few reported cases among a big number of unreported cases. The report further says that one transgender is killed every 3 days across the globe. Such increasing statistics reported has brought the attention of masses towards the issues transgender communities are facing in our so called cultured societies.

Transphobia is deep rooted in cultures and societies therefore many cases of violence and discrimination go unreported. However, researches shows that Central and South America are reportedly having huge numbers of transgender individuals

murdered i.e. 643 since 2008 out of which 325 occurred in Brazil, 60 in Mexico and 59 in Colombia (Jauk, 2013). Another study conducted in 2006 carried interviews of transgender people in Argentina. Out of 302 people 86% interviewees confirmed being mistreated by police, moreover 90% reported abuse because of their gender identity. The interviewees also stated 420 of their friends died and 40% of these deaths were resulted from murder, drugs or suicide. It is majorly the transphobic behaviors of people which is the main cause of violence against transgender community. Also the self-injurious attempts and attitudes of transgender people is an outcome of isolation and stigmatization they face in the society.

Including more statistics from Asian countries shows 59 transgender persons were murdered since 2008, out of which 12 killed in Pakistan, 10 in India, and 10 in the Philippines (Jauk, 2013). In Nepal transgender are specifically spotted and abused by public at large and police in particular arrest transgender people owing they act as "public nuisance". In prison they are mishandled and abused. Such instances especially on part of the police encourage more discrimination, harassment and violation against them.

Apart from these hate crimes, employed in any organization a transgender person who is in his pre-operative phase of sex transition surgery faces special challenges and discrimination which ought to be managed tactfully (Human Rights Campaign, 1999d). In such situation peer support can be a face saver. By right as employers have a right ''to regulate employee appearance and behavior in the workplace for reasonable business purposes'' so that the employees behavior and getup conform with the set and acceptable standards of community (Human Rights Campaign, 1999d).

Thus, such norms can raise challenges for transgender people of maintaining their jobs. Such situation calls for proper awareness, education and support of the peers as well as the management for transsexual and transgender employees so that their performance may not be affected (McNaught, 1993).

## UN resolutions for human rights protection Lesbian, Guys, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBTs)

There is viral spread of movement regarding the acceptance, recognition, and protection of basic human rights of

transgender people. The issue has been recognized by the United Nations that societies and cultures oppose the people who do not conform their actions, behaviors and appearances to their gender identities. The UN highlighted that the countries should make measures for the protection of gender minorities such as transgender people to eliminate violence and discrimination against them. Such ideas of acceptance and recognition of these gender minorities at government level may encourage tolerance for transgender people and overrule any religious confusion. Discrimination and violence against transgender people has become an important concern globally. The issue highlighted by the UN as well as other human right organizations has certainly brought the problems faced by these gender minorities into general public's attention. However, much needs to be done to ensure these gender minorities are accepted and recognized by societies as equal right holders.

Ban Ki-moon at the UN called for halt against any discriminatory action of violence and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Emphasizing the issue he said, "Let me say this loud and clear: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are entitled to the same rights as everyone else. They, too, are born free and equal,". Further he adds, "All human beings – not some, not most, but all," Mr. Ban pointed out. "No one gets to decide who is entitled to human rights and who is not."

The report submitted in the UN, showed the transgender people along with other minorities (generally mentioned as LGBTs) face widespread hatred, abuses, discrimination socially, emotionally and economically. Crimes such as target killings, sexual violence, harassment and physical assault are common against these minority groups around the globe. However, awareness and acceptance at the government level has surely increased. The issue of equal human rights for LGBTs had been raised in 2005 signed by only 32 states which by 2011 have grown to a number of 85 showing an increase in attention for the issue.

## Legal identity of transgender people in Pakistan

Many countries across the globe are addressing to the issues of equal human rights and laws for promoting the social and economic well-being of transgender people. The *transphobia* is deep rooted into the societies and concrete measures need to be

planned to eradicated its harmful effects. Recently, Supreme Court of Pakistan has taken suo-moto notice for right of khwajasiras and recognized that they should have a separate identity. This has recognized a separate legal identity of transgender people in Pakistan known as "Khwajasira". Also, the honorable court has given transgender people right to vote and compete for elections.

However, the trickledown effect of these laws will take some time to be absorbed and observed by the society at large. Still the people at large try to "cleanse" their communities by throwing them out because they believe transgender people pollute the peace and ambiance of their residential areas. There are multiple evidences of abusing and beating transgender people by their neighbors and none in the community raise voice to halt such discriminatory acts. Transgender people become a target of everyone's mockery and humiliation. The negative attitude of Pakistani society against transgenderism is majorly based on the religious teachings of Islam which strongly condemn gender non-conformity. Heterosexuality is the only acceptable sexuality in Islamic view (Polat *et al.,* 2005) and male and female are the only sex recognized by divine laws, all rest gender identities are thus considered as sin. A society who nurtures these believes hardly accept the transgender people rather give them equal rights. On the other hand the religious practices of Islam are performed in different manner following different physical movements by men and women. Also their religious gatherings are segregated between male and female. All this makes it difficult for transgender people to practice Islam and perform prayer. Such situations discourage the transgender people and they give up on practicing the religion instead of becoming a target discrimination and mockery because of their gender deviance.

The prevalence of Islam explains the nature and extent of *transphobia* prevalent in a country. However, Islam also preaches human rights and does not exclude trangender people from their rights or laws of inheritance etc. The modern sect of society is not much influenced by the beliefs of Islam exhibit transphobia due to other reasons. One reason could be the lack of knowledge about the gender identities and variations involved. Lack of information is result of considering transgenderism as an inappropriate and unethical topic for discussion especially in public.

The role of media in Pakistani society is also discouraging and portrays transgender people as "prostitutes or low class entertainers" (Polat *et al.,* 2005). Moreover, media represents transgender people being abused which provoke same behaviors in society towards transgender people. Thus media builds such stigmatization and general perception in the society about transgender people that it becomes difficult for families and relative to accept them.

Such a conflict between the societal norms, religious teachings and individual's gender identity deviance raises fear and frustration in the transgender person and the family. Despite its medical and psychological underpinnings, Pakistan mental health professionals are not offering therapy to both the affected person and their families.

## Transgender persons and organization:

Organizations as well as people working in organizations have different views on gender minorities. The feminist school of thought can easily associate with the gender minorities and feel empathetic towards them. They recognize the efforts and struggle one has to go through being part of a minority group (Newitz, 1993). An opposite feminist school of thought believes transgenderism is another way of male domination and is reason for downfall of society (Raymond, 1998).

While transgender remains a marginalized topic in studies of work and organization, then, gender scholarship on transgender tends to evade issues of work and organization. To date, only about a handful of publications have investigated transgender in relation to work and organization. This includes theoretical discussions about transgender and organization theory (Linstead & Pullen, 2006; Brewis *et al.,* 1997), and empirically founded work on transgender employees (Schilt, 2006; Schilt & Connell, 2007), most of which tends to take a constructionist perspective.

A huge number of transgender lives in western countries an estimation of 2-3% of males are engaged in cross-dressing (APA, 2009). However, there is increasing recognition for the status of transgenderism recently. Little is being done to avoid discrimination against them for entering organizations. Western countries have defined laws protecting transgender people so not be discriminated on their gender identity when applying for jobs. US has passed law considering it illegal on part of employer to deny transgender job only because of their

gender identity. Many parts of the world though are still to realize the gravity of the issues transgender persons face in getting a job as well as keeping a job.

Moreover, transgender people are still subject to hate crimes, violence, harassment and labour market discrimination, including verbal abuse, employment discrimination, problems obtaining health care, physical abuse and housing discrimination (San Francisco Department of Public Health, 1999). A more recent survey of transgender people in San Francisco reported that 'nearly 40% of respondents believe they were discriminated when applying for a job, and 'over 24% of people reported that they had been sexually harassed at work', 'nearly 19% of respondents have experienced trouble in advancing in their company or department', that 18% of respondents have been fired from a job due to gender identity discrimination, and that 59% of respondents are living in poverty. However, no such report about the transgender individuals in Pakistan has been found. And a survey of UK transsexuals reported that 33% of respondents were forced to leave work by their employer during or after transition (Whittle, 2000). Transgender people with successful careers in mainstream organizations therefore often conceal their transgender identity at work, and people who do not conceal it tend to have problems finding work, keeping work, or being promoted at work. In many countries, persistent transphobia, that is, discrimination and abuse against transgender people, forces transgender people into prostitution, crime and illegitimate forms of work to support themselves. Unconfirmed estimates suggest that 80 percent of all transgender people in the US have been incarcerated at least once during their lifetime. Paraphrasing C. Wright Mills (1959), it may therefore be argued that the stigmatization and marginalization of transgender people causes personal troubles for transgender individuals that constitute social problems for communities, organizations and societies.

On studies of mind-body dualism, it was advocated that body alone acts as a medium of construction and disciplinary control alone. Contrary to that recent developments in the study objects to these arguments and states that body is active participant in construction of social actions, interactions, knowledge, and experiences (Williams & Bendelow, 1998; Dale, 2001). Merleau-Ponty (1962) challenges the mind-body dualism, states that body is an embodiment of our thoughts, actions,

interactions, emotions and experiences thus is not passive actor of our rational thoughts only. There arises need of studying the transgender body and how it feels, experiences, actions, interactions and gives meanings to things. Few researches have studied how gendered embodiment affects bodily feelings and experiences at work (Dale, 2001; Knights & Thanem, 2005) and how the body constitutes an active medium of management and organization which enables people to learn and create knowledge in organizations (Edenius & Yakhlef, 2007), commit to work with buzzing excitement, and make decisions based on their gut-feeling (Lennie, 2000).

## Discrimination against sexual minorities

Discrimination is an exceedingly complex issue which is a major obstacle against workforce diversity management for the organizations. Discrimination is multi-faceted issue which has different drivers at different units of analysis. At individual level of analysis discrimination is rooted into the cognitive and affective factors (Dipboye, 2013). Discrimination initiates with stereotyping (Essed & Stanfield, 1991; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996) and prejudice (James *et al.,* 2001). At the level of analysis of a group discrimination spreads through social identity and self-categorization theory (Dipboye, 2013). Also group level homophily results in exclusion of the odd from the group (James, 2000). The organization level discrimination is triggered through structural considerations (Kanter, 1977) as well as systems perspective (Dipboye, 2013). However, discrimination at organization level is an abstraction of what happens at individual level and group level (Dipboye *et al.,* 2005).

Occupational discrimination against transgender persons has been viewed from perspective of a psychological process governing the supply side as well as demand side of restricting sexual minorities to certain occupations (Badgett & King 1997; Hewitt 1995). Discrimination can be categorized into formal and informal discrimination.

Formal discrimination is defined as "explicit behaviors that are legally sanctioned e.g. rules regarding the hiring, firing and promotion decisions etc.", while the informal discrimination includes "less explicit form of discrimination which may not be exhibited intentionally (e.g., eye contact, lack of warmth, shortened interaction length)" (Dovidio & Hebl, 2005).

Though there is ongoing awareness and recognition of gender minorities societal level, discrimination at workplaces based on the gender identity and sexual orientation is still on (Mays & Cochran 2001; Ragins *et al.,* 2003). Discrimination is more likely in the jobs where employees are assumed to play certain gender specific trait role, such as male employees are required to be assertive and decisive. Sexual minorities particularly transgender are generally perceived to be lacking in the gender specific traits appropriate to their biological sex thus they are considered as unfit for the jobs (Tilcsik, 2011).

Discrimination against the sexual minorities in the workplace can be observed at all phase e.g. in hiring, promotion, demotion, evaluation, and mentoring. Such discrimination hampers the sexual minorities' ability to hold and perform in gender- typical occupations. Transgender people may give up on even perusing a gender typical job anticipating future discrimination they will have to face in the organization. Likewise, concentration of sexual minorities in gender atypical jobs may influence others to select same kind of occupations for themselves assuming they are sexual minorities' friendly (Hewitt 1995).

Sex discrimination is seen in advertising and promotional campaigns of organizations wherein they focus on gender typical roles. Including sexual minorities especially transgender into the corporate sector calls for organizational changes (Hornsby, 2006) with respect to its policy, training programs, discrimination and harassment. However, mostly policies and training programs regarding sex discrimination and harassment does not include discrimination based on gender identity (Kormanik, 2009, p.25). Such organizational change must be driven by concrete leadership commitment ensuring the implication of harassment and discrimination policy (Munoz & Thomas, 2006).

When the literature discusses the diversity management issues, considering gender is only considered having two options i.e. male and female. However, the diversity issues do not only restraint to the challenges and issues raised because of having male and female workers but also other gender identities such as transgender people. There is an increase in need of the organizations to devise policies for workplace discrimination and strict compliance with gender diversity programs (Kormanik, 2009). The plans for gender diversity should not be including

broad categories but also consider the minority groups i.e. transgender persons. Recently organizations have begun considering sexual orientation and gender identity as causes of workforce diversity issues (Heller, 2006).

Sexual minority employees fear for discrimination at the workplace even if having no personal experience of discrimination (Levine & Leonard, 1984; Croteau, 1996). A study on Out and Equal Workplace surveyed 2000 LGBT employees and noted that 73% respondents have experienced or fear discrimination and harassment at workplace. Such discrimination at workplace is result of transphobia deep rooted in the culture and society. However, the discrimination against transgender comes from values driven by social, moral and religious learning thus is discouraged to question or negotiate (Colgan *et al.,* 2007). Furthermore, the lack or mere absence of organization policies protecting transgender employee rights and discouraging discrimination and harassment against them and such discriminatory behaviors.

A number of studies have undertaken the subject of sexual discrimination in the workplace. The literature is mostly discussing the forms of discrimination; the process it follows as well as the personal experiences of employees discriminated. Sexual discrimination may take two forms: i.e. formal and informal (Munoz & Thomas, 2006; Levine & Leonard, 1984). When the transgender candidates are excluded from hiring process or promotional procedures, resources are distribute discriminately based on sexual bias etc. it forms formal discrimination. On the other hand informal discrimination resides in the culture, values, attitudes and behaviors of the co-workers. It includes verbal and nonverbal abuse, disrespectful gestures and behaviors as well as hurting the credibility of sexual minorities.

Discrimination against the LGBTs in particular transgender people can cover non-inclusion in work relating social events, not giving dependent care policies, benefits etc. The organization's diversity management efforts and training manuals does not include transgender issues. Formal discrimination has surely reduced in western countries due to social awareness, legislations and organization policies in compliance to the legislation (Colgan *et al.,* 2007, 2008; Giuffrè *et al.,* 2008). However, informal discrimination is deep rooted into the culture and behaviors of people thus special attention and

discriminated behaviors against sexual minorities is still on (Bell *et al.,* 2011; Buddel, 2011; Silverschanz *et al.,* 2008).

Transgender people face employment discrimination therefore unemployment is high among them (Kirk & Belovics, 2008). Underemployment is an important issue the transgender people face (Minter & Daley, 2003). Employment discrimination is significantly high as 15%-57% transgender people from the sample of study were discriminated for employment or face issues like promotion delay or denial (19%), termination (13%–56%) (Badgett *et al.,* 2007).

Another study indicates that transgender employees are discriminated at workplace in multiple ways e.g. discrimination at hiring, firing, or demotion (Lombardi, *et al.,* 2001). Studies on transgender people show that economic discrimination is the root cause of violence, rape, assault and harassment etc. Also the need of identifying patterns of economic discrimination has been highlighted by few authors (Lombardi *et al.,* 2001, p. 98). Results of the study conducted by Lombardi *et al.* (2001) shows discrimination against transgender people can be studied through the outcomes of firing and denying of equal employment opportunities. However, discrimination for transgender persons starts long before the firing and denying employment process begins.

## Transgender experiences differs from Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual (LGB)

Fassinger & Arseneau (2007) contended that LGB and transgender individuals are "gender transgressive sexual minorities in that they together compose a subpopulation of individuals who challenge prevailing social conventions regarding the expression of gender and sexuality". Stigmatization experienced by LGBT people is "attributable to their gender variance by virtue of their social presentation and identity and/or their sexual attraction" (APA taskforce, 2009). This gender transgressive may give rise to similar experiences, processes that follow broadly similar trajectories (Gagne´, Tewksbury, & McGaughey, 1997; Lev, 2004). Thus, many of the issues discussed in LGB vocational scholarship may be pertinent to transgender people, but the unique manifestations of these issues for transgender people may not be captured in the LGB literature (Chung, 2003; O'Neil, McWhirter, &

Cerezo, 2008). Indeed, qualitative studies suggest that experiences of workplace harassment and discrimination, organizational culture, and identity management are salient for transgender people but that these experiences are shaped specifically by gender identity and presentation. For example, in a study conducted by Budge *et al.,* (2010) half of the respondents reported that they were threatened physically as well as abused emotionally. Even they were fired because of their gender identity. Approximately all the participants reported that they have to face different behaviors from coworkers once they show their identity of being transgender. Transgender employees also professed they feel pressure to present themselves conforming to the way normal gender presents (Schilt, 2006; Schilt & Connell, 2007) therefore transgender persons choose whether to show their gender identity or hide it from coworkers at organization.

Political and social activism have gained acceptance of LGBT people in most developed economies (Raeburn, 2004; Eurobarometer, 2008). Moreover, a transformation in many societies have been evident reducing discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (Elliot & Bonauto, 2005; Waaldijk *et al.,* 2006; Hunt & Eaton, 2007). Organizations have started devising their diversity policies including sexual orientation and gender identity (Kersley *et al.,* 2006). This is eminent as LGBT people have been experiencing discrimination at work for long (Colgan *et al.,* 2007; Denvir *et al.,* 2007; Guiffre *et al.,* 2008).

# 3. Theoretical Framework

The inclusion of transgender employees in the organization brings organizational change. This organizational change has multiple repercussions ranging from workplace diversity issues to workplace discrimination, organizational performance to employee development. Literature has supported the role of leadership as a change agent that can transform the employees so to make them accept change (Abbas & Asghar, 2010) and nullify the suspected negative effects a change can raise in the organization. Leadership has a central and key role to play for cultivating such an environment that change is easily accepted and absorbed by the employees. Inclusion of transgender employees in the organization is a change brought into the organization by the leadership with a significant vision. Thus leader has a role to devise strategies and plans to realize their vision (Bass, 1985). Also, it is responsibility of leader to align the employees, remove any structural hurdles and nurture such an atmosphere which facilitates the transition (Nanus, 1992).

Leader has been viewed by different authors from multiple angles. However, the behavioral perspective talks of transformation leadership theory. The transformational leadership theory advocates such role of the leader that engages in transforming the followers. Such transformation gain employee trust as a

result of which they work to achieve organizational goals. Transformational leader uses his charisma to transform followers in bringing ideology into reality. Transformation is defined by Silins (1994) and Hu (2001) as a process of linking organizational strategy and psychological aspects that can bring about any change. Transformational leaders enhance employee confidence, motivation and awareness for achieving both the organizational goals as well as their personal development (Burns, 2003). The transformational leadership brings such dedication in employees that they focus on the progress of the organization ignoring their personal reservations against any decision.

Leaders are key actors in creating harmony among the employees so to meet the organizational goals effectively. They need to communicate and make the employees comprehend their role in achieving the organizational goals so to remove any personal or structural hurdle in the way. The key ingredients of transformational leadership such as the charisma, individualized and personal consideration, intellectual stimulation, and communication can bring out employees' best thus improving organizational efficiency.

Leaders can influence their followers to let go of their self-interest over the organizational goals (Bass, 1985). Furthermore, Bass (1985) suggested three significant behavioral components transformational leadership possess i.e. charisma, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The outcome of transformational leadership is an organizational culture that enlightens the employees to see meaning in their work, and challenge themselves to bring out best of their capabilities. Moreover, transformational leaders enact the organizational vision and regulations to set example for the followers. As a result employees' unquestioned acceptance for the regulations, strategies and goals is achieved. Also transformational leader develops understanding of follower's individual needs which motivates them more to comply with the leader's vision and decision.

Transformational leadership framework was conceptualized into four dimensions by Avolio *et al.,* (1991) i.e. Charismatic leadership, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and visions presentations. Transformational leadership should present and communicate the vision is such a way that not only generate trust of the followers but also enable them to foresee

the future development the organizations may undertake so that they can cooperate realistically to help realize the vision (Bennis & Nause, 1985; Hou, 2001; Hsiang, 2002). Through using charisma, transformational leader can entice confidence, motivation, strong belief and willingness to achieve organizational goals. The transformational leader can nurture the ideology and value in the followers (Grundstein-Amado, 1999; Bennis & Nause, 1985; Hou, 2001) that can make them accept transgender people without any discrimination. Again, transformational leader can motivate followers using words and actions of considering transgender employees to have equal rights in the organization so to set an example for the followers.

Thirdly, through giving individualized consideration to the followers the transformational leader can motivate both the transgender and other followers. Thus such an organizational culture of trust and empowerment builds which focus on individual development (Bennis & Nause,1985; Hu, 2001) thus can mitigate the workplace discrimination.

Lastly, through intellectual stimulation the transformational leader can transform the followers' belief and value system as well as their development of thinking. Through such process the transformational leader can enlighten the followers to accept and adopt an altogether new viewpoint. Thus, accepting the transgender people as their colleagues sharing equal employment opportunity rights can become easy under transformational leadership.

We propose that leadership plays such a central and key role in forming and transforming the followers. Therefore, workplace discrimination against transgender persons can be managed well if the leadership plays its due role. Initial framework is given below.

**Figure 1.** *Theoretical Framework*

## Proposition

Transformational leadership can transform employees to address workplace discrimination against transgender persons in the organization

# 4. Akhuwat Cloth Bank Case

Akhuwat is an organization operating with a vision of poverty alleviation through raising compassion and equality among people. The literal meaning of 'Akhuwat' is brotherhood. Akhuwat preaches social justice and mutual support as in 'brotherhood'. Interest free microfinance is given to empower the people trapped in vicious circle of poverty. It put efforts to build a social support system through which distribution of wealth, capacity building and socio-economic development could be achieved.

Akhuwat is conceived based on inspiration of the Madina Agreement in Arab during time of Propeht Muhammad PBUH; where in migrants of Makkah and residents of Madina were made brothers so to build a socio-economic support system. Akhuwat denies conventional microfinance practices and gives interest-free loans to the poor. A borrower is supposed to utilize the loan in economic endeavor and be able to attain self-sufficiency so he will be able to not only payback loan but also become a lender to other poor people.

The current situation is that the poor is deprived, he is hungry and homeless, whereas the rich is threatened and scared of every poor who may snatch away his wealth, he keeps security with him,

in the house, on the road thus everywhere he goes. So Dr. Amjad Saqib (Executive Director-Akhuwat) made a bridge between these two. The poor will know that the rich is helping me gracefully and respectably thus a good society may bring up. When Akhuwat talks of poor, it defines 'poor' as someone who is either socially, economically or emotionally deprived. When Dr. Amjad Saqib met transgender community of Pakistan, he found them deprived on all the above grounds. There a plan was set to work for the betterment of transgender (khwajasira) community.

In light of this, Akhuwat, in collaboration with Fountain House, launched the Khwajasira Support Program (KSP) in 2011. The intervention focuses on removing the barriers that have led to the social and economic exclusion of the khwajasira community. They do not aim to reform or reshape the behavior and identity of the khwajasiras instead they hope to help them successfully integrate within the social fabric of our society while maintaining their distinct identity.

The long-term goals of social and economic integration of khwajasiras is complemented with short-term strategies to provide immediate relief and support to their community through income supplements and health care facilities. The primary focus has been on older khwajasiras for whom it is more difficult to earn a living and support themselves. As the organizations have entered the second phase of KSP Program, they have also begun offering skill trainings and interest-free microfinance to make the members financially self-sufficient.

The Khwajasira Support Program has been expanded in Lahore and surrounding areas and further to Sargodha. There are 351 registered members of the program. As further extension, khwajasiras have been employed at Akhuwat and Fountain House. A new venture of the Cloth Bank has been initiated by Akhuwat. In this program, rich people are motivated to give away their used clothes which they no more need. These clothes are then washed, ironed and packaged to be sent to the poor and needy. For the task, transgender individuals have been employed so to give them dignified job. This way they will be earning with respect, engaging with other people will build their social confidence, and emotional healing will take place.

The transgender community in Pakistan is forced to live under marginalized circumstances with poor hygienic conditions, no or limited education level, no social grooming.

Transgender persons who never have worked in any organization, have not learnt discipline or work ethics. Moreover, due to their gender identity they could not develop a healthy relationship with other members of society. They have been dejected, discriminated, disgraced and harassed by the society. Such people when join an organization, will bring multiple challenges along; ranging from workforce diversity to workplace discrimination.

There arose need to undertake a study on the subject and identify the challenges posed to the organization. Also, to find the solution of such a tricky situation which may benefit both the organization as well as the transgender employees.

# 5. Methodology

## Research Philosophy

This study is following the interpretivism research paradigm which is among few most followed paradigms (Saunders *et al,* 2007). Interpretivism requires extensive observation and interaction with the subjects. The results of the research come through the research process which cannot be compared with other external objects (Neuman, 1994) as is normally done in positivist paradigm. Interpretivist paradigm views reality is constructed through shared meanings of social interactions of beings and interpreted through the same lens. The people come with different value system their interpretation of reality is dependent of the lens set through their value system. The phenomenon under study i.e. discrimination is highly complex and affected by person's value system. Also the reality cannot be separated from the people constructing it therefore; interpretivism is the suitable research philosophy.

## Philosophical assumptions

Ontological assumption of the study is that the nature of reality is subjective. Subects of the study build different perceptions of the phenomenon based on their personal learnings and value systems thus the reality can be intrerpreted

through different ways. Epistemological assumption of the study is building knowledge through interactions between the researcher and the subjects under study.

## Type of research

The research design of a study is determined by the type of research question. Therefore, our research question indicates an exploratory research design which is needed to explore phenomenon where in the subject and its interaction with the environment has multi-dimensional outcomes (Yin, 2003). However, the study is not focusing on comparative or correlational aspects of the measures. Also, the purpose of research is not mere description of the phenomenon therefore; descriptive and explanatory research designs are not suitable either.

The most suitable research design for this study is qualitative design which is exceptionally appropriate to study underrepresented or marginalized populations (Dispenza *et al.,* 2012; Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2007; Fassinger, 2005). The information has been gathered through conducting semi-structured interviews as well as through archive analysis, the organization's document, newspapers, and participant observations.

## Research Approach

The research question was more suitably answered using inductive strategy as the study has no prior literature available to support particularly in reference to Pakistani context. While deductive reasoning bounds the researcher to deduce inferences in light of the existing literature available on the area of research, the inductive research gives freedom to the researcher to base his research on more factual and real evidences. Inductive research analyze the research evidence gathered and generate ideas and explanation of the phenomenon while deductive reasoning initiate research having idea beforehand and then gather data to approve or disapprove the idea (Holloway, 1997).

The deductive research approach is linked with positivism paradigm where in the researcher intends to reach to a specific point in the study. On the other hand, inductive approach is linked to interpretivism paradigm in which the researcher searches for a specific idea and create generalizations (Crowther

& Lancaster 2009). Saunders *et al.* (2007) has asserted that by using both approaches it is very easy to estimate a logical and correct result but it is necessary for the research to combine correct piece of these approaches.

Inductive approach mostly linked to interpretivism philosophy where in the researcher comes up with subjective reasoning by stating examples from real life (Ridenour *et al.,* 2008). Deductive approach is linked with the positivism philosophy, which include hypothesis to prove assumptions. In this kind of approach, it is necessary for the researcher to be general, but this research issue is specific and related to the development of human resources in the organization (Ritchie & Lewis 2003). Primarily inductive approach is more suitable for our research question as it does not restrict research process through structured methodologies and supports more "goal-free" analysis (Scriven's,1991, p.56). Further, it allows flexibility and research findings emerge from significant, frequent, and dominant themes from the evidence collected.

On the other hand, in deductive analyses, such as those used in experimental and hypothesis testing research, key themes are often obscured, reframed, or left invisible because of the preconceptions in the data collection and data analysis procedures imposed by investigators. Deductive approach is more related to quantitative research (Bryman, 2004) wherein more data gathered ensures more reliability of research.

Limited literature is available on discrimination experienced by the transgender people particularly with reference to Pakistan no such work is found to date. However, few researches have addressed the issue in developed countries; none is found in developing countries like Pakistan where the problem could have different repercussions than the developed countries.

## Research Strategy

The research strategy flows from the research question. Case study method is selected as it is reasonable for nature of the study being exploratory and qualitative. As case study is most common way to undertake in qualitative inquiry" (Stake, 2000, p.435). Also, the case study strategy has embedded flexibility allowing the usage of multiple data collection methods (Yin 1989; Merriam, 1998). Flexibility is the main strength of case study in terms of gathering evidence for research and interpretation of the results (Robson, 1993). Case study method of data collection was

selected. This has provided more detailed information on the area of research referring to the research question (What), as well as the selected paradigm i.e. Interpretive and logic (Inductive) of the research.

A case study method is used to carry out in depth empirical investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. According to Yin (2003) a case study design should be considered when the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; when it is impossible to manipulate behaviors and ignore contextual conditions as they are relevant to the phenomenon under study. Therefore, the research question of this study requires an extensive and "in-depth" description of reasons that motivates poor borrowers to become donor of the organization.

Single holistic case study is found appropriate for the research topic as the case is a unique and extreme situation (Yin, 2003) in context of Pakistan corporate sector. Employing transgender in organizations is not a usual practice.

## Time Horizon

Longitudinal studies collect data from the same sample (a 'panel') of people on more than one occasion (usually using the same methods) over a period of time, so that unlike cross-sectional studies that collect data only once and in one short period, sequences of action and social change over time can be analyzed. Both approaches have their pros and cons as cross-sections cannot show direction of associations; are subject to extraneous factor and 'omitted outcomes, the longitudinal study are based on years of analysis, higher cost of data collection (Geoff & Payne, 2004). Therefore, due to limited time available for this research, cross sectional approach has been used.

## Population and Sample

The population of interest for the study is transgender employees working in the Akhuwat Foundation. The study may be replicated in any organization employing transgender persons. Also the study is generalizable in similar organizations.

As the population of the study is transgender employees working in Akhuwat Foundation, we have conducted interviews with the persons both the transgender as well as other employees who are in daily interaction with the transgender employees

to participate in the study. Due to small sample size of transgender employees, all of them were interviewed till saturation point occur i.e. no new information received from participants. The appropriate sampling technique for the study was purposive sampling as a certain selection criterion was set for the participants of the study (Ritchie *et al.,* 2013). Transgender employees have been selected as critical case sampling is undertaken to better explain the phenomenon under study (Ritchie *et al.,* 2013).

Proper interview protocols were observed so to gain more rich and deep information (Noonan *et al.,* 2004). Interviews were conducted till no new information could be received from the content thus saturation point attained. Interviews were recorded in mobile device and record of the same was kept in computer then transcribed thereafter. The selected organization Akhuwat Foundation is currently employing transgender persons. The researcher tried to reach and interview all transgender employees working at Akhuwat currently, including interviews with the HR personnel and Executive Director of the organization. The inclusion criterion for transgender employees is their National Identity Card showing gender as *'khawajasira'*. Both Male-to Female (MTF) and Female-to-Male (FTM) transgender people were planned to be considered for the study. However, only MTF transgender individuals are employed at the organization.

## Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis can be a happening bounded in a context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The *unit of analysis* for this research is the organization under study i.e. Akhuwat Foundation.

In order to remain in focus this paper has bind the case by (a) time and place (Creswell, 2003); (b) time and activity (Stake); and (c) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Binding the case has ensured that study remains reasonable in scope.

## Data Collection

The qualitative research methods provide flexibility to the researcher to collect in- depth and detailed information whereas the quantitative methods restrict the researcher through objectivity (Silverman, 2000). Potential source of data collection for qualitative study are documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and

physical artifacts (Yin, 2003). It is specified that a particular method is appropriate to be used for a specific research strategy. Researcher has choice to use either qualitative or quantitative methods or even mixed methods (Fisher, 2004).

For this study, data/information has been collected by using qualitative method as more in-depth response about behavior and characteristic of research topic are required. To collect in-depth and detailed information interviews, participant observation, archival records and documentation has been used.

Interview method provide flexibility in conducting and gathering information therefore large amount of data has been gathered. The interview methods has been adopted as it could be combined with other data collection methods (Millward 2001). Semi structured interviews has been used as primary instrument for evidence collection. Semi-structured interviews provide opportunity to participants to describe their experiences without limiting them to certain already provided answer options. Interview questions include section from demographic information of participants i.e. age, gender, education, and employment experience. Questionnaire on workplace discrimination faced by transgender employees has been adopted from the study of Dispenza *et. al.,* (2012).

## Criteria for interpreting findings

In qualitative research the criteria for interpreting the findings needs to be set which could be done by clearly stating a rival theory (Yin, 2009) i.e. explanation of the research findings through a lens opposite to the one proposed by the researcher.

This study is proposing the solution of the issue of discrimination in the transformational leadership. Through transformational leadership the employees of the organization will be transformed to accept their transgender counterparts and recognize their equal rights. Rival explanation for this study is rooted into theory x which advocates that authoritarian leadership style is needed to control the employees and get required behavior and actions of them.

If the evidence collected is analyzed and the findings show that transformational leadership behaviors will affect the employees of the organizations to mitigate the workplace discrimination, the rival theory will be rejected. Otherwise rival theory will be accepted which shows that an authoritarian leadership style is more suitable for making employees comply

with the set policies and suitable behaviors required to meet the organization goals thus, reducing the workplace discrimination.

## Analytical procedures/Methods of analysis

The interviews were first transcribed from the recorded audio files. Then the content was coded. A separate file for codes was then developed and the participant responses were extracted for appropriate codes. Grounded theory principals were used for coding (Fassinger, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) as well as analyzing the interviews. Through this coding document, primary and secondary themes were identified.

Later on the information gathered was shared with the participants to gain corrective feedback or insights regarding the results. Further the authenticity and reliability of the information was checked by asking peer review to analyze and give feedback on the root of all coding and themes are the original interviews.

However, the analysis procedure is not linear i.e. first the data will be gathered and then the analysis will be conducted. But it is more of cyclic nature which confers that evidence collection and analysis was done through multiple phases. A higher level of synthesis was focused by not following too mechanistic approach of data analysis (Patton, 2002). The analysis in inductive approach is in line with the qualitative data analysis procedure described by Miles & Huberman (1994, pp.10-11). It includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Cresswell (2002) identified five steps of analyzing the information using qualitative research design. The first step involves initial thorough reading of textual data which then is segmented according to the objectives of the study. These segments are given appropriate labels and made categories. Further, redundancies and repetitions in the categories are eliminated. Finally, a model based on these categories is formed.

## Reporting Structure

Composing the case study is a stressful task and demanding on the researcher. As a general rule, the researcher must focus on the target audience to select appropriate structure of case study. Target audience set the preference in deciding the style and structure of the written report (Yin, 2003). Six structures of case study writing include: linear-analytic, comparative,

chronological, theory building, "suspense", and un-sequenced. "The same case can be described repeatedly, from different points of view or with different descriptive models, to determine how the case might best be categorized for descriptive purposes – as in arriving at the correct diagnosis for a clinical patient in psychology" (Yin, 2003, p. 153).

Linear-analytic is suitable reporting structure for dissertations and journal articles. Thus the same structure of case study writing has been used. Linear analytical structure describes topics and subtopics following the problem under study and then later analysis, discussion and conclusion is provided.

## Establishing research quality

The validation of qualitative research is established through using multiple strategies to ensure credibility and rigor of the research (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Four types of trustworthiness can be maintained in qualitative research i.e. credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba,1985). These includes peer debriefings and stakeholder checks which serve two purposes i.e. establish credibility of the research and conduct a research audit by comparing the data with the research findings and interpretations thus establishing dependability of research.

Triangulation was used to establish credibility of the research wherein information has been collected using multiple sources i.e. observation, documents and archive analysis in addition to semi-structured interviews. Peer debriefing has been conducted to remove any biases as well as the respondent's feedback was taken to remove any flaw in the information and interpretation of textual data. Thick rich description has been achieved by presenting the participants' voices under each theme and by providing detailed description of case. Finally, the researcher has successfully found the assistance of a peer (expert in qualitative research) who proofread and debriefed.

Case study protocol was observed and proper documentation has been maintained to support the study. Further, the reliability of the research was established by operationalizing the research process into detailed steps.

The generalizability of the research has been based on analytical generalization i.e. theory generalization and not the statistical generalization, it is important to know that case

studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes.

## Ethical Considerations

As the topic of research may be sensitive to the participants, anonymity of the respondents' names has been established. The participants of the study were ensured that the information they will share with the researcher will be solely used for academic research purposes. The information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with who so ever will be interested. Furthermore, the results of the study will be shared with the participants as well as the management of the organization so the fruits of research process may contribute in developing healthier workplace for the transgender employees.

When the researcher becomes an instrument for research study, the ethical issues of biases become more severe. Before the research process actually start biases need to be bracketed, and memo will be written down to address the assumptions of study and to mitigate the impact of biases and subjectivities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Assumption of the study could be (i) not all transgender persons will experience the discrimination and (ii) inclusion of transgender people into the organization will raise workplace discrimination issues.

# 6. Data Analysis

## Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process of review and interpretation of the data. While analyzing the data the researcher moved back and forth a number of times to reach to the true concepts. Codes then emerged out of the data through the reading and re-reading the transcripts. Codes are phrases that represent the essence or key attributes of narrative/verbal information. Afterwards a code structure was formed where in the codes were categorized under parent codes. The approach followed for that is an integrated approach of both the purely inductive method where in the information/narratives are read in a de novo line by line method and the emerging factors important to the participants are noted. Also, the somewhat deductive approach called start-list method in which a preliminary organizing framework drives the place where codes are linked. Thus the benefits of both types were integrated in this manner. Broad code types were identified and then sub-codes were identified by thoroughly reading verbal information.

The first step was to read the transcripts with free minds without having any preliminary assumptions in mind. Initial codes were then prepared and after that the transcript was then re-read several times. More codes were highlighted and

revised. That enabled to highlight the factors important to the participants without any researcher bias. Then final code structure was developed using the start-list method and codes were categorized and sub-categorized accordingly.

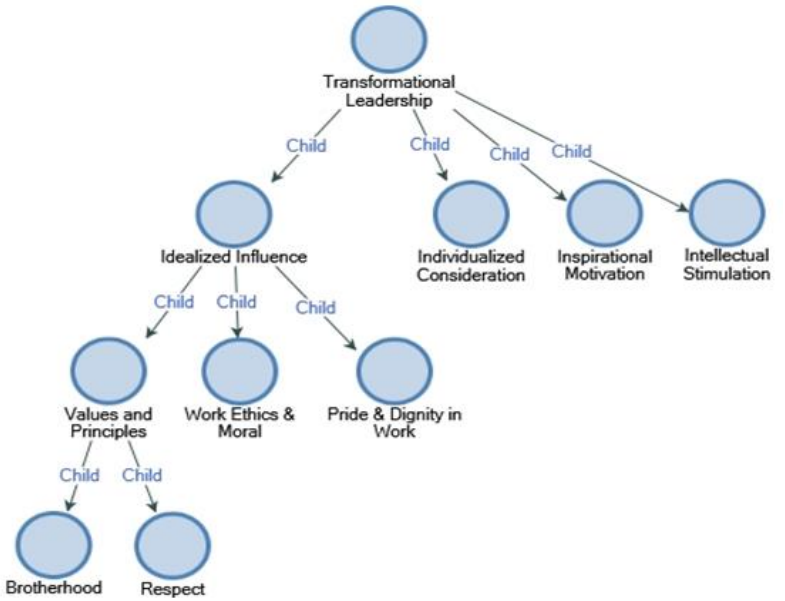


**Figure 2.** *Transformational Leadership Factors*

**Figure 3.** *Workplace Discrimination Factors*

Initially 89 codes were identified by through exEmp2ing the transcripts. However, they were later distilled to 28 items. The similar and closely linked codes were merged. The maximum references were found to be on the code 'Educating Transgender (Khwajasira) and other employees' (77) followed by 'Respect' (69) and the least references were in support of the code 'Inclusion in Work Related Social Events' (08). For the effective data management, the NVivo 11 software was used. It supported transparency and made it easy to organize large amount of data. Table 1 shows detail account of references against each code.

**Table 1.** *References on nodes (Data Source: Interview)*

| Name | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Transformational Leadership | 17 | 138 |
| Idealized Influence | 15 | 29 |
| Pride & Dignity in Work | 11 | 24 |
| Values and Principles | 15 | 44 |
| Brotherhood | 12 | 25 |
| Respect | 18 | 69 |
| Work Ethics & Moral | 10 | 21 |
| Individualized Consideration | 12 | 31 |
| Inspirational Motivation | 14 | 46 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 12 | 32 |
| Workplace Discrimination | 17 | 198 |
| Formal Discrimination | 14 | 96 |
| Career Development | 8 | 21 |
| Conflict Management, Grievance handling, Harassment | 9 | 14 |
| Hiring, Firing, Promotion, Demotion | 6 | 9 |
| HR policies and Regulations | 9 | 26 |
| Resource Distribution | 7 | 13 |
| Salary & Benefits | 7 | 13 |
| Training | 0 | 0 |
| Educating Transgender (Khwajasiras) & Other Empl. | 18 | 77 |
| Training on Skills & Behaviors | 11 | 36 |
| Informal Discrimination | 15 | 102 |
| Emotional Abuse & Psychological Distress | 13 | 28 |
| Identity Management & Gender Specific Trait Roles | 10 | 21 |
| Inclusion in Work Related Social Events | 6 | 8 |
| Limited Interaction with Empl. Increased Grp. Cohes. | 8 | 15 |
| Societal Discrimination | 10 | 30 |

The section presents analysis of the data collection made in the semi-structured interviews, observation and secondary data (Khwajasira Support Program annual report and pictures). The analysis is segregated into three categories based on the

challenges the organization face when employs transgender persons, workplace discrimination issues and the role of leadership in dealing with such issues. A large number of themes emerged in each category which were then further refined to 28 themes. The research design was based on interviews of 06 transgender (khwajasira) employees, 02 employees working directly with transgender (khwajasiras), 08 employees at managerial positions and the Executive Director-Akhuwat Dr. Amjad Saqib. The managerial employees included the Project Manager, the Project Coordinator (Cloth Bank), Manager (Cloth Bank), In-charge (Cloth Bank), Manager HR, HR Personnel and Manager Training. Before starting the interviews, the participants were briefed about the research and their consent was taken. The interviews were conducted in Urdu and Punjabi as all the transgender employees could converse in local languages only. The transcripts were then translated into English. The Interviewees were identified with codes for the sake of confidentiality. In the findings and analysis part the excerpts from the interviews has been mentioned in double quotations marks and in italics. The missing data is shown with dots, the text included by the researcher to elaborate what the interviewee actually was saying are mentioned in square brackets. The coded transcripts are given in the Appendix. The relevant data is identified into different categories indicating the factors that rise to workplace discrimination and then the role of transformational leadership in addressing the workplace discrimination issues in the organization. Each category includes different themes as mentioned in the coding structure below:

Transformational Leadership
Idealized Influence
Values and Principals
Brotherhood
Respect
Work Ethics & Moral
Pride & Dignity in Work
Individualized Consideration
Inspirational Motivation
Intellectual Stimulation
Workplace Discrimination
Formal Discrimination
HR Policy and Practices
Salary and Benefits

Resource Distribution
Career Development
Training
Training on Skills & Behavior
Educating transgender (Khwajasira) & other employees
Conflict Management, Grievance Handling & Harassment
Hiring, Firing, Promotion & Demotion
Informal Discrimination
Inclusion in Work Related Social Events
Identity Management & Gender Specific Trait Roles
Limited Interaction with Employees & Group Cohesion
Emotional Abuse & Psychological Distress
Social Discrimination

## Transformational leadership

An important element that is affecting almost everyone in Akhuwat is the leadership of the organization. When the employees were asked their opinions on the leadership they very enthusiastically remarked. All the employees (transgender and others) have shown similar views towards the leadership. When a participant was asked of the Akhuwat leadership he/she replied as: *One is that Dr. Amjad Saqib's personality is such that everyone knows whatever he intends to do, he do that. He always does a different thing. Likewise, when he initiated this (Khwajasira Support Program), our team welcomed his endeavor. As this was a unique thing to do (*mgt1). Another interviewee said, *Dr. Amjad Saqib is such a strong leader that the followers know whatever step he would take will be right* (mgt2).

This shows the unquestioned authority of the leadership cored in the personality of the leader. This has greater impact on employees' actions, behaviors and thoughts. Also the intellectual stimulation of the employees is enhanced as the leader always come up with something new and challenging to do. Participant described his faith in the leadership by saying that, *whatever Akhuwat is doing is very good. It cannot do any better than that. The khwajasiras (transgender) cannot get Akhuwat like treatment anywhere else* (Emp1). Moreover, the Akhuwat leadership is not limited to influence its employees in the organization only but also has set an example for other organizations to follow. *Now after knowing about the Khawajasira support program and its successful outcomes, few organizations are giving job opportunities to the transgendered* (mgt1).

Another attribute highlighted by the respondent (mgt1) was related to intellectual stimulation where in the leadership held meeting with the employees to actually learn and make up their minds to take up the task. *Even Dr. Amjad Saqib used to do meetings with us; they always talked about this project and tried to make our minds to accept that program. That this program is going to be started and I request your help in this* (mgt1).

Besides giving a vision, the leadership has focus to empower the employees and to transform the place of transgender persons in society. Another employee told us; *however, Dr. sahab's view was to empower transgendered, to give a way to pull them out of misery by giving them a respectable mean of earning* (mgt2). When asked who told the employees on how to treat the transgender employees, the respondent said: *then our senior management like CEO and CCO used to talk to khawajsira very lovingly, politely and respectfully. Dr. Amjad Saqib loves them a lot and Khwajasiras also blossoms with admiration in his company* (mgt2). The leadership also set an example for all employees on how to behave with the transgender employees.

Leadership also focuses on personal growth and development of the employees. An interviewee explained that they try to make transgender employees learn: *they should build their character and refine their lives. Unless your character is not refined people will not take you seriously. If your character is fine people will respect you* (mgt3). On the other hand, the leadership taught rest of the employees to respect the transgender employees as equal human beings: *I tell them they are normal human beings like the rest. We should treat them respectfully. I tell them, they do very hard work, may be more than what you (rest of employees) do. Even they do not have any family support, they try to pace up with us in work. They are honest. However, they are transgender, you should respect them as they respect you. Initially there were such things, but with time they went off* (mgt3). *Dr. Amjad Saqib instructed us to treat the transgender persons nicely. He first prepared us to realize why the decision is needed. He told us the misery these people are going through and the level of grooming they received from their environment. He said even if they (transgender) misbehave or do not understand something, you have to treat them politely and with patience. Do not give them pressure in work. Do not speak to them in loud voice. Do not*

*give them targets instead ask them how much they can achieve. Set their goals accordingly* (mgt3).

About the question for the career growth of transgender employees a participant told that, *further, we are thinking about involving them into loan recovery activities also. However, right now it is under process* (mgt3).

About the leadership vision, an interviewee told that the vision is basically to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich. *Now you see the poor is deprived, he is hungry and homeless, whereas the rich are threatened and scared of every poor who may snatch away his wealth, he keeps security with him, in the house etc. so Doctor sahib made a bridge between the two poles. The poor will know that the rich is helping me gracefully and respectably thus a good society may bring up* (mgt5).

More on how the vision and values are made understood to the employees, the interviewee said: *all the people have this vision. See, whatever goes in salt mines will turn salt. So when they come here the values, culture and environment of the organization have strong impact on them. When they are outside Akhwuat they do not realize such things. When they see Dr. Amjad Saqib and see that he lives in rented house, he lives a very simple life, he eats simple food, may be you must be eating better food than what the eats. He is not show-off or spendthrift. Whatever he does it is for Allah SWT. For that it is important to have strong faith. This place is a test for us and we have to go back to Him* (mgt5). Also that, *Dr. Amjad Saqib has devised code of ethics for his staff. They are written on the notepads given to employees. These include: being nice, humble, polite, punctual, honest, passionate, tolerant, hopeful, show consistence, speak truth, build a relation based on mutual respect, do hard-work, keep cleanliness, show respect for elders and care for youngers, be expert in your field, be friendly, never misuse authority, make collective and supportive efforts, avoid useless conversations and save one's breath, keep no smoking environment* (mgt5).

When the leadership was asked on how he selects his team of such motivated and soulful people he replied: *we do not have any strict criteria for selection of employees. We just see if the person is well conversant, noble and presentable. We don't know what is inside him. But we have such a strong value system in our organization that we assume that who so ever will come in our organization will accept the follow the same virtuous values*

(mgt6). Further the positive believe in human being was reinforced when the organization leader said: *see why to be suspicious of everyone. Every human person is a good human. A good person when comes an organization he will bring his good nature into the organization. So the first thing is that we do not consider anyone as a bad person, unless he proves himself to be one* (mgt6).

This strong believe in goodness of human being is the charisma of leader. Which an employee described as: *now after coming in Akhuwat and especially seeing Dr. Amjad Saqib personality, I realized that we have been born to do certain things in the world. Our life should have an objective to work up to. Every human being has some instilled skills and expertise and we at Akhuwat are given with chances to work. That is the main difference between the world outside Akhuwat and in Akhuwat* (mgt7).

## Idealized Influence

An important element of transformational leadership is the quality of influencing idealistically. How the performance goals are explained to the employees, the interviewee replied *that initially we were asked not to give them khwajasira (transgender) employees pressure in work. Do not speak to them in loud voice. Do not give them targets instead ask them how much they can achieve. Set their goals accordingly* (mgt3). It is more of a supportive way to communicate the performance targets and now they have set targets to motivate employees to work for better.

The morning assembly has a huge impact on harmonizing all the employees on the same set of values and ethics. The participants were inquired about the mechanism through which the vision, values, beliefs and ethical standards are communicated to the employees. They replied, *early in the morning we have assembly in which we offer prayers and values of Akhuwat and principles are communicated. The daily reinforcement of concepts makes them fresh in every employee's mind* (mgt7). The leadership entices employees to think about the ones who are unfortunate and deprived. During the monthly function of 'Khwajasira Support Program', Dr. Amjad Saqib addressed the guests and said, *I will ask all of you especially the visitors, what you think a good society is? Is a good and progressive society the one with huge buildings, smooth roads, computers, cars, or is it a good society where the*

*deprived and poor ones are taken care of. I think a good society is one where people take care of those who are less fortunate [clapping]. They come here with every month with balloons and other things to enjoy. We treat then as our guests and we believe that our place fills up with beauty and scent when they join us here [clapping]* (speech-1).

The leader acts as a mother to the employees. As the mothers give training to their kids on what is right and wrong, same as Dr. Amjad Saqib tries to build character in the employees. During a meeting with the loan officers in the Masjid, he addressed the audience as; *If you will do work, you will be respected. If you will ask mothers how they train their kids, it is same as we try to train you. I ask you to do in your life what you can do in a Masjid. Do not tell lies in Masjid, do not talk loud in masjid, and do not laugh loud in masjid so same you will not do in your life* (Speech Transcript-3)

## Values & Principals

The most essential element on which the foundation of Akhuwat stands is its concrete values and principals. The values and principals are set by the leadership which employees have accepted whole heartedly. These values and principals are repeated so they are truly absorbed by the employees. An interviewee who has managerial position expressed the same as; *even you must have observed that on the event (monthly function of Khwajasira Support Program), we were revising the same teaching to everybody repeatedly* (mgt1). Another participant stated importance of values and principals in Akhuwat as: *Like this principal that Akhuwat foundation is to provide such equal facilities to all people so they should grow economically and socially. Your behavior should reflect softness and honesty. These values of Akhuwat should become part of your character and should be reflect where ever you go to work. Akhuwat employees working in head office or in any branch or even go to another organization should be a living display of Akhuwat values* (mgt3). While talking the challenges the organization faced when transgender were included in the workforce, one participant said, *in Akhuwat it is different as our organization is already working for noble cause of humanity. That might be an element missing in the corporate sector.* More he added, *Akhuwat values are the foundation for change. Like this principal that Akhuwat foundation is to provide*

*such equal facilities to all people so they should grow economically and socially. Your behavior should reflect softness and honesty. These values of Akhuwat should become part of your character and should reflect where ever you go to work. Akhuwat employees working in head office or in any branch or even go to another organization should be a living display of Akhuwat values* (mgt2). The values and principals are the core element that is governing all the practices and regulations of the organization. The values are closely linked to religion. A participant who has been one of the pioneers enlightened about the Akhuwat values. *As Allah SWT says that those who are of faith are brothers and also that you will not go in heaven unless you have good relations with each other. It means you have to be cordial with one another and should not create problems in the world.* More he added*, the underneath purpose is to create such a society where people knows their responsibilities towards others especially who are less fortunate i.e. the deprived one. It is a message of love, respect and care. You must have read a book 'Utopia', he gave a concept of imaginative heaven named 'utopia'. But he had given a vision cannot bring it in practice. Dr. Amjad Saqib has given its practical version. See Allah SWT says to give away whatever is more than your needs. Dr. Amjad Saqib has devised code of ethics for his staff… (See Appendix)* (mgt5).

After interviewing few participants, it was noticed that all employees have inculcated the values and principals with same zeal. Upon inquiring about the reason one participant said; *every day early in the morning we have assembly in which we offer prayers and values of Akhuwat and principles are communicated. The daily reinforcement of concepts makes them fresh in every employee's mind* (mgt7). Another participant added; *all the people have this vision. See, everything turns salt in salt mine... like, if only you learn to 'speak the truth' and 'speaking respectfully' i.e. our values, you will automatically get rid of many bad habits* (Appendix-mgt5). The Executive Director replied to same question as; *after employees are selected we make them go through training, like we give them literature to read. We repeatedly communicate the things to make them remember. We ask them to do what you could do while being in masjid or home the same you can do in office. We have a vision, objectives, practices, principles, 25-30 values. So this whole gives an Akhuwat framework. So employees work under*

*this umbrella and grow. Then the same thing is that everything turns salt is salt mine. When you go to Masjid, you will become like people in the masjid. So we try to keep our offices clean, nobody should tell lies and everybody should treat others respectfully. So the same things are transferred to other employees* (mgt6).

The leader Akhuwat was asked if there are any ultimate values or principals for which there is no flexibility in Akhuwat. He replied politely but firmly. *But two things we have zero tolerance for. One is moral corruption and second is financial corruption. For example, we have a large number of females coming for loans, we don't want any male person to misbehave with them or even give them bad gestures to make them uncomfortable and also financial corruption even of a single penny will not be tolerated and the person will be terminated. So rest is all fine, we all sometime come late, speak loud etc.* (mgt6). During his address to the loan officers in a masjid, the Executive Director Dr. Amjad Saqib said; *you will understand everything when you will understand the true spirit of Akhuwat. Why do we come to masjid for meetings, why do we ask people to come to masjid for taking loans? This place joins us in brotherhood. So these values should be inculcated in you… Even if I do not see, Allah is watching you all that how loyally you are performing your duties. One is good and other is best. I want you to be best. In virtues you should be the best.* (Speech Transcript 3). At the monthly event of Khwajasira Support Program, the Executive Director addressed the transgender community and other citizens from different walks of life. He said: *… I will ask all of you especially the visitors, what you think a good society is? Is a good and progressive society the one with huge buildings, smooth roads, computers, cars, or is it a good society where the deprived and poor ones are taken care of. I think a good society is one where people take care of those who are less fortunate [clapping]. They come here with every month with balloons and other things to enjoy* (Speech Transcript1). A transgender employee expressed how he values Akhuwat as: *I like everything here. I have no one, no brother, no father, no mother, no sister, no wife, no children. These are my mother and father. They love me a lot... particularly me* (Trg6).

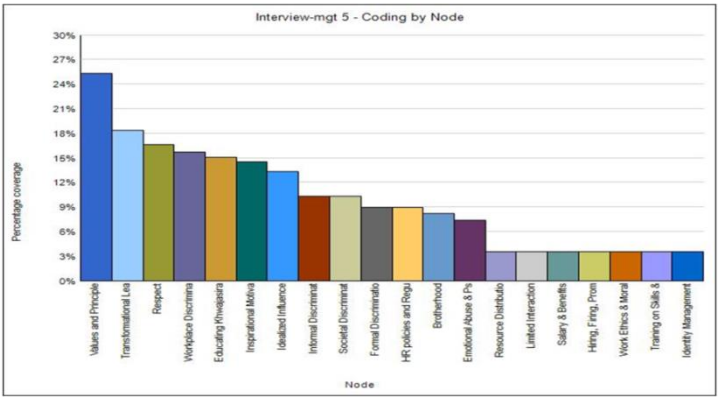


**Chart 1:** *Coding by Node (Data Source: Interview)*

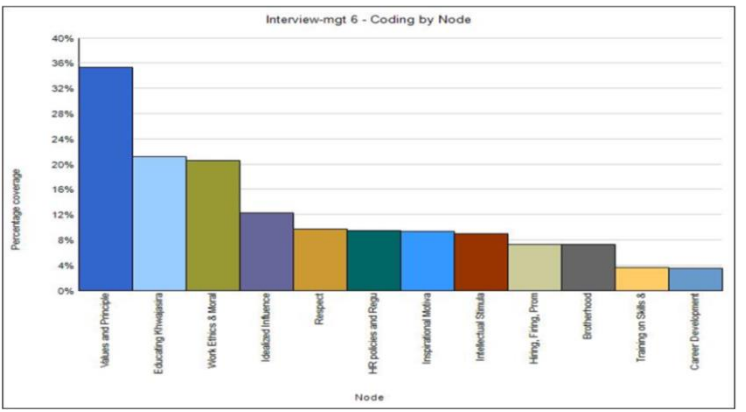


**Chart 2:** *Coding by Node (Data Source: Interview)*

The element of values and principles is ranked highest by above mentioned two respondents. Likewise, the participant observation analysis has also supported the importance of values and principles in the study. Maximum coding is assigned to the node of values and principles followed by HR policies & practices, and educating transgender (Khwajasira) and other employees.

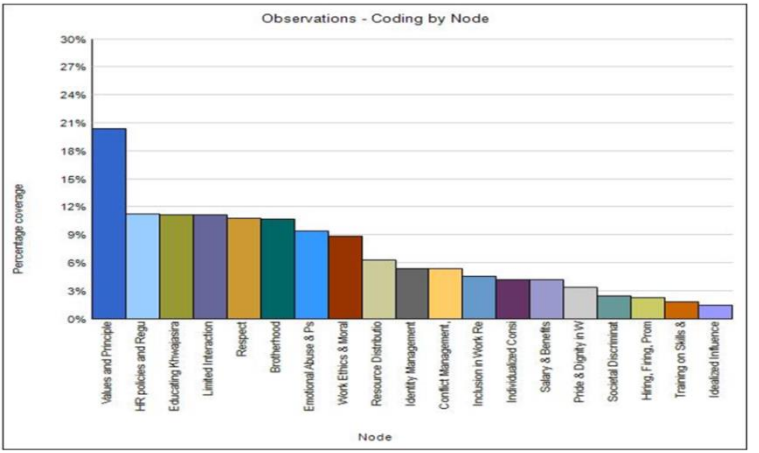


**Chart 3.** *Coding by Node- 'Values & Principles' (Data Source: Observation)*

**Table 2.** *References on Nodes- (Data Source: Participant Observation)*

| Name | Sources | References |
|---|---|---|
| Transformational Leadership | 0 | 26 |
| Idealized Influence | 1 | 24 |
| Pride & Dignity in Work | 1 | 2 |
| Values and Principles | 1 | 7 |
| Brotherhood | 1 | 4 |
| Respect | 1 | 5 |
| Work Ethics & Moral | 1 | 5 |
| Individualized Consideration | 1 | 2 |
| Inspirational Motivation | 0 | 0 |
| Intellectual Stimulation | 0 | 0 |
| Workplace Discrimination | 0 | 32 |
| Formal Discrimination | 0 | 17 |
| Career Development | 0 | 0 |
| Conflict Management, Grievance Handling & Harassment | 1 | 3 |
| Hiring, Firing, Promotion, Demotion | 1 | 1 |
| HR policies and Regulations | 1 | 4 |
| Resource Distribution | 1 | 2 |
| Salary & Benefits | 1 | 2 |
| Training | 0 | 5 |
| Educating Transgender (Transgender (Khwajasira))s & Other Empl. | 1 | 3 |
| Training on Skills & Behaviors | 1 | 2 |
| Informal Discrimination | 0 | 15 |
| Emotional Abuse & Psychological Distress | 1 | 4 |
| Identity Management & Gender Specific Trait Roles | 1 | 3 |
| Inclusion in Work Related Social Events | 1 | 2 |
| Limited Interaction with Employees increased Group Cohesion | 1 | 5 |
| Societal Discrimination | 1 | 1 |

The above Table 2 shows coding on each node in observation as data source. It is seen that maximum coding is at the nodes 'values & principles', followed by 'respect' and 'work ethics & morals'. Further the third data source i.e. Secondary Documents & Pictures analysis also supported that values & principles is the most important factor influencing employees' behaviors, actions and interactions thus it may have sound effect on workplace discrimination.

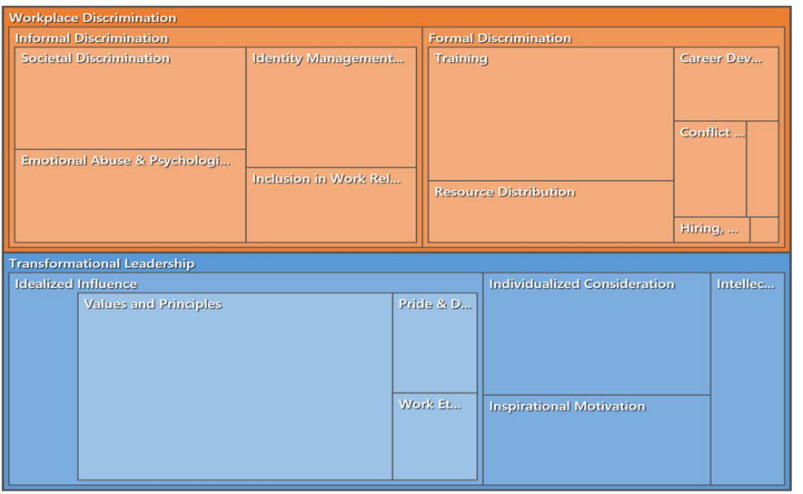


**Chart 4.** *Hierarchy Chart- (Data Source: Documents & Pictures)*

## Brotherhood

The value of brotherhood is inspired from the great Madina agreement between migrants and residents of Madina. Through this agreement the Prophet Mohammad PBUH made the residents of Madina brothers with the migrants from Makkah. So much so that they (residents of Madina) shared their wealth, belongings and even gave right of inheritance in the property of the brother (resident of Madina who accepted the migrant his brother). This selfless brotherly relationship solved the problem and migrants did not become a big burden on any single resident of Madina. Same value of brotherhood is nurtured and expected among all employees of Akhuwat. The leader Akhuwat Dr. Amjad Saqib said in a speech: *The lost dream of brotherhood becomes reality* (speech transcript-2).

When participants were asked about how they accepted transgender employees, an interviewee replied as; *they are our brothers. You should say them salam and give way to them to show respect* (mgt3). Further he added that *we make employees understand that they should not take up the matter on your own. You are as a team here. Correct one another when someone is doing wrong. The conflicts will affect your work. Help out each other and take criticism in positive way. Do not make it an ego issue.* (mgt3).

Literal meaning of Akhuwat is brotherhood. The participant quoted the importance of brotherhood as: *like this principle that Akhuwat foundation is to provide such equal facilities to all people so they should grow economically and socially. Your behavior should reflect softness and honesty. These values of Akhuwat should become part of your character and should be reflect where ever you go to work. Akhuwat employees working in head office or in any branch or even go to another organization should be a living display of Akhuwat values* (mgt3). The employees in Akhuwat are working on a pay scale that is much low than the market scale. The reason is the ultimate sense of brotherhood among the employees and also with borrowers (Appendix: mgt4). *Akhuwat is not a profit earning institution, it is an ideological entity. Its purpose is the message of 'akhuwat' i.e. brotherhood* (mgt5). He further elaborated on the set of values and principles Akhuwat stands by (Appendix: mgt5).

When the same element of brotherhood is analyzed in the secondary data i.e. documents and pictures; it is seen that brotherhood is a domineering value on Akhuwat. It is depicted through the display of unity, message of peace, respecting other's self-dependence and care for others. through this value of brotherhood, Akhuwat creates a culture of respect, equality, unity and compassion.

**Figure 4.** *Word-Tree 'Brotherhood' (Data Source: Documents & Pictures)*

## Respect

Another important value highlighted by the participants is the element of 'respect' among the employees and among all the human beings. The employee working closely with the transgender employees appreciated the value of respect as: *they respect me a lot* (emp1). Moreover, he added; *in addition, we have been observing them working here since long, they are more respectful than others* (emp1). *I felt that they are respectable* (emp2).

A participant mentioned that the leader Akhuwat (Dr. Amjad Saqib) repeatedly talked about the transgender community. *He always used to portray it that these people are deserving, we never respected* them (mgt1).

About the transgender employees the participant said; *so likewise, if you respect them they give back double or triple respect and sincerity* (mgt1). Another participant said; giving them (transgender employees) a respectable mean of earning (mgt2). Further he highlighted the leadership role in making employees understand what treatment is expected with transgender employees. *Then our senior management like CEO and CCO used to talk to khawajsira very lovingly and politely and respectfully. Dr. Amjad Saqib loves them a lot and Khwajasiras also blossoms with admiration in his company* (mgt2).

*They want you to respect them and know them for the person they are. They have never been given respect ever. That element of 'respect' is everything for them* (mgt2). So the overall employees have sense of respect and loyalty towards him… *Here there is strong respect for them but in an environment where any less respect is given they might not work there… I haven't met any person who came here in visit and was not moved with the idea that Khwajasira are respectfully employed here… Although it varies from person to person but given the fact that they know what place transgender Khwajasira are given in society everyone feels good seeing them having a respectable employment… A visitor from USA came and met the Khwajasira employees here. She was so moved and wanted to tip them. We asked her not to do that as they are respectable employees of the organization… Just speak to them politely and respectfully that will be more than enough for them as all they want is respect and recognition… We are extra cautious because they had very*

*friendly experience with Akhuwat which we do not want to spoil and they also demand the same respect and friendliness each time* (mgt2).

A respondent told us how important the factor 'respect' is for the transgender employees as: *…If they are respected, they can do all tasks whatever you ask them. They can get more money in begging but with that is linked hatred, insult etc. so now they have found respect here from all employees and managers. They are our brothers. … so, they happily took up the additional work. They said that they feel good that we are packing clothes for those people who dislike and disrespect us. We will surely send them a gift of our love, respect and grace* (mgt3).

Working in Akhuwat is respectful for the employees: *…Even the khwajasira employees appreciate that they have been respected here. Even their families had abandoned them saying that you are threat to our pride. Society has declined them. When they get respect here that is the ultimate thing for them. Respect is the crucial element they yearn for…* (Appendix: mgt4).

*The underneath purpose is to create such a society where people knows their responsibilities towards others especially who are less fortunate i.e. the deprived one. It is a message of love, respect and care… (Appendix:* mgt5).

*So they (transgender) realize that these are the people who spare time for us, they talk to us, care about us. So I do not give them anything in fact, whatever they are getting is their share as defined by Allah. What I do is only show them love, treat them with respect and care them. Surely when you love someone he will return your love with love. You will abuse someone he will abuse you. I sit with them hug them, others say they are stinky. So they feel close to me* (mgt6).

The transgender employees expressed about the reaction of family and society when they got job at Akhuwat. *They appreciated it a lot. First, they used to disregard that I beg on streets. They many times had asked me to leave begging. Now that they know I have started this job with Akhuwat, they have great regard for me. They thank God that I have started earning halal…* They respect my decision of quitting begging and doing a job. When I dress up for going on job the people in my area, the neighbors do ask me, where are you going? When I tell them I am going on for job (trg2).

*…I am here with high respect. These people are like my mother and father. This is my home. The officers are very good.*

*They are very good human beings… No, nobody ever has given such comments on us. Everybody greets me and say salam whether it is any officer, sweeper, guard. The thing is that I always respect elders and officers and love youngsters, so everybody respect me* (trg6).

Given below is the word-tree on 'respect' based on the secondary data i.e. documents and pictures we analyzed. It shows that Akhuwat raise a message of peace for all and respect for differences based on social divisions of human race. Respect is the most prominent element in dealing with employees at Akhuwat. As they are deprived of respect all their lives, the transgender employees value this element more.

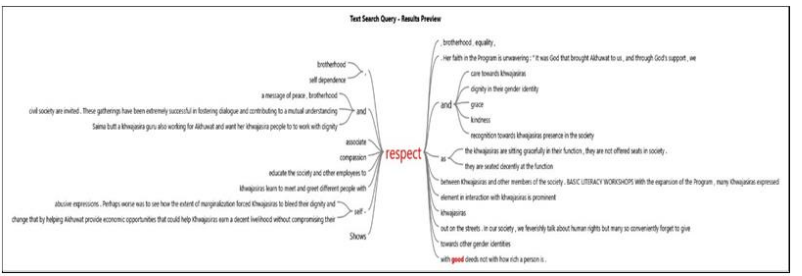


**Figure 5.** *Word-Tree 'Respect'- (Data Source: Documents & Pictures)*

As evident in the charts given below, the factor 'respect' has been highly discussed by many respondents whether they were transgender or others.

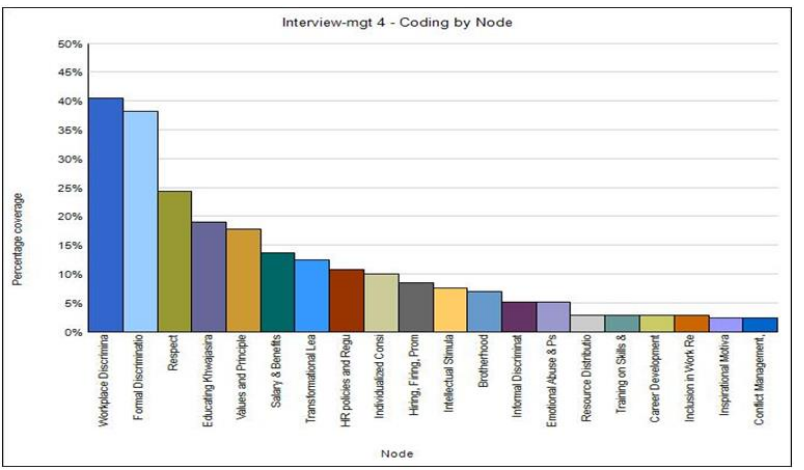


**Chart 5.** *Coding by Node 'Respect' (Data Source: Interview)*

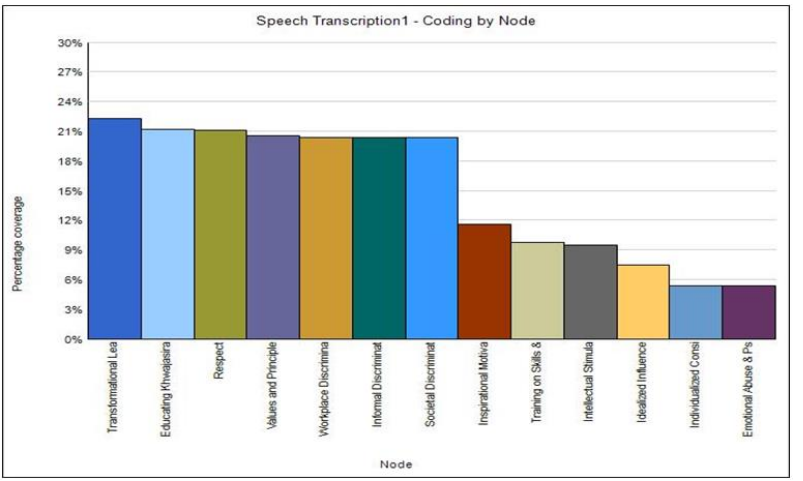


**Chart 6.** *Coding by Node 'Respect'-(Data Source: Speech Transcript)*

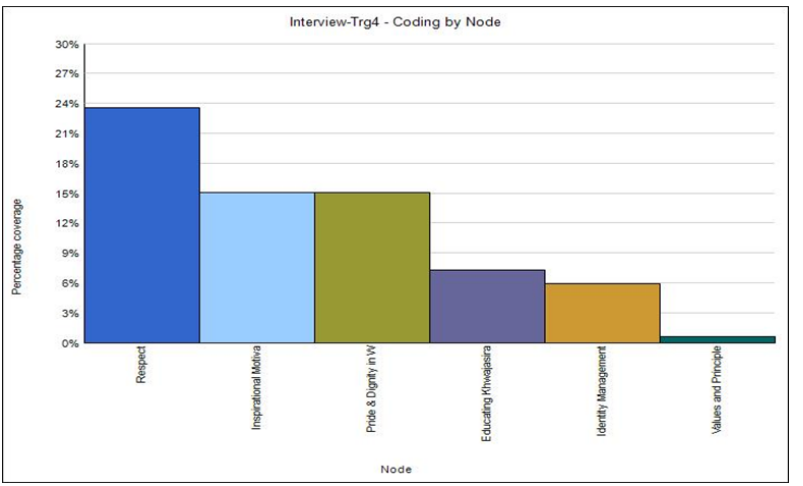


**Chart 7.** *Coding by Node 'Respect'-(Data Source: Interview)*

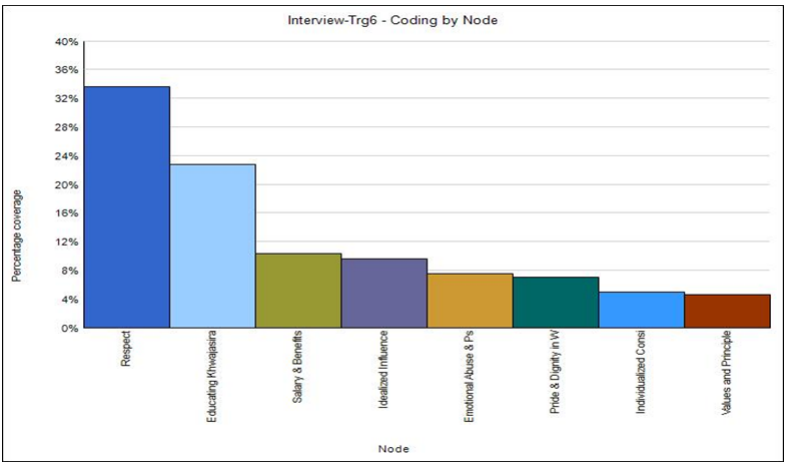


**Chart 8.** *Coding by Node 'Respect'-(Data Source: Interview)*

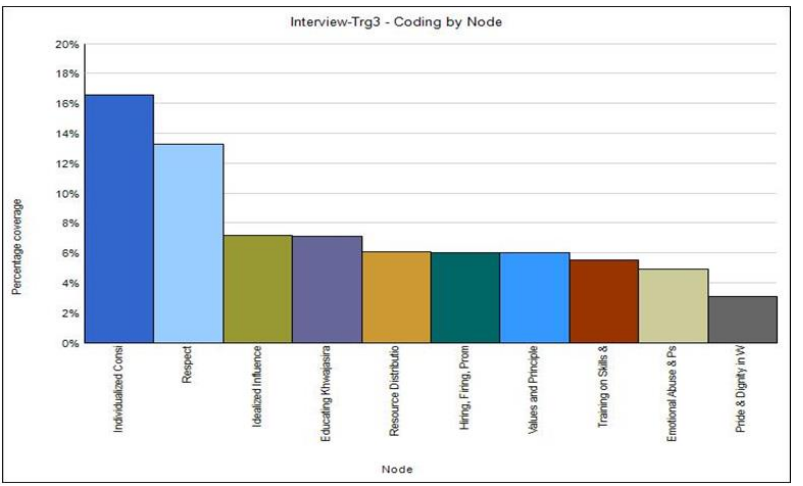


**Chart 9.** *Coding by Node-'Respect'- (Data Source: Interview)*

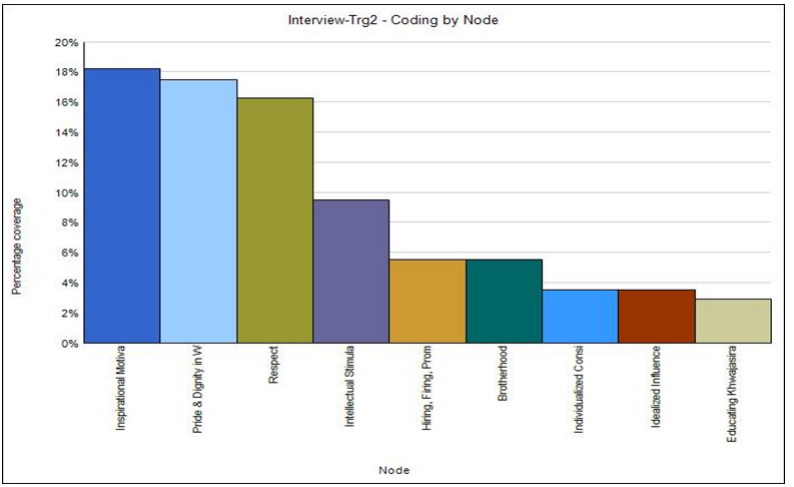


**Chart 10.** *Coding by Node- 'Respect'-(Data Source: Interview)*

## Work ethics & moral

There are certain work ethics maintained in the organization which are being taught to transgender employees and other employees too. As transgender employees have limited experience of working in organization setups, it is important to make them learn work ethics.

*Whatever you do outside the premises is your own discretion but inside the fountain house you will not have any 'friendships' here. I should not get know that you are making phone calls while on duty. You know such things should be clearly communicated* (mgt1). Moreover, the participant suggested that *the organization if hire them they will have to take serious steps as initially they do not comply with the instructions* (mgt1).

While describing nature of interaction with the transgender employees, a participant said: *Although the interaction with them needs to be objective based means focused on work issues only otherwise they can talk for hours. And they know that they are answerable for their responsibilities therefore the work ethics are defined and communicated clearly* (mgt2).

Gradually the transgender employees were made adjusted into the work environment e.g. observing discipline of the workplace etc. *So that is how we made them follow timings. Then we bound them on leave i.e. you cannot just stay home and take leave from work. You have to inform the office before. So gradually they learn all e.g. they are not supposed to talk loud in office.*

*And if you have conflicts with anyone, discuss with me* (mgt3). *They were made to learn how to behave. Say salam and stand up for a senior. You should know all about Akhuwat. You should be able to tell people what Akhuwat is doing?? They learn the Akhuwat values and philosophy in the morning assembly time* (mgt3).

Executive Director Akhuwat described the importance of work ethics as*: so that is our moral framework. We train people on the same and ask employees to follow these. So you can elaborate it as much as you want, these will be inculcated more finely… But two things we have zero tolerance for. One is moral corruption and second is financial corruption. For example, we have a large number of females coming for loans, we don't want any male person to misbehave with them or even give them bad gestures to make them uncomfortable and also financial corruption even of a single penny will not be tolerated and the person will be terminated. So rest is all fine, we all sometime come late, speak loud etc.* (mgt6). On the other hand, transgender employees believe they already know the etiquettes. *I already knew stitching and other things. We also know how to talk and behave with others and in gathering. Nobody should say that we don't know how to talk etc.* (trg3).

## Pride & dignity in work

The question was asked about how employees think working at Akhuwat has changed the life of transgender. One employee working directly with the transgender employees said: *They are not beggars; they work hard to earn money* (emp1). *They all are doing their jobs to earn with dignity* (emp2). *Then when speakers or students come, they had interaction with them. So that was a new thing for them. They never have been in a courteous environment in their life* (mgt1).

The transgender employees working at the cloth-bank were taken to visit the SOS children where the packets of clothes were distributed among the kids of orphanage. One of the managers in cloth bank elaborated: s*o wanted that transgender should make a connection with the children so they may learn for whom they are doing this work. So it was important that you should know whom your work is benefitting* (mgt2). Moreover; *we also went to a function where celebrities gave them certificates. So that was very motivational for them not because any celebrity*

*gave them the certificates but because their names were mentioned on the certificates i.e. they were acknowledged* (mgt2).

*You yourself have bounded yourself to begging and other professions. You can also get work gracefully…They can get more money in begging but with that is linked hatred, insult etc. so now they have found respect here from all employees and managers* (mgt3).

When the time duration was extended the transgender employees welcomed. *So, they happily took up the additional work. They said that they feel good that we are packing clothes for those people who dislike and disrespect us. We will surely send them a gift of our love, respect and grace* (mgt3).

The transgender employees' views on the pride and dignity they get in working at Akhuwat are depicted in these responses. *The thing is that it varied from day to day, sometimes 800, 500 or even 1000 rupees a day. it was unpredictable earning. Since I came here, I thank God for His blessings. I have not felt bad that I am confined to work in a room, I do not get bored. God has given me a good opportunity. I like that the earnings are halal. I have worked hard to earn that without spreading my hands for alms. I thank God a lot that He has turned me towards good path. The people here are good and respect us a lot* (trg2).

*They respect my decision of quitting begging and doing a job. When I dress up for going on job the people in my area, the neighbors do ask me, where are you going? When I tell them I am going on for job. I not only work there but also helping the needy people. They ask me how you are doing so. I tell them we have spare clothes that we no more use, people send them to Akhuwat. We do the sorting, repairing, washing and then packing to finally send the packets to those who do not have clothes to wear* (trg2).

*People will respect you and love you in Akhuwat. You will be able to earn gracefully for yourself. Now, here when people visit us, they feel proud of us and say they are doing very good and noble thing by working to earn money for themselves. I wake up every day with new zeal to go to work. Now people in my area ask me, where do you go daily, we do not see much of you wandering around begging. I tell them I was jobless at that time, now I have a job to go to. People respect me and appreciate a lot. They invite me on tea and meals* (trg4).

## Individualized Consideration

The questions were asked to seek how the leadership has built a relationship of giving individualized consideration to the employees. *However, Dr. Amjad Saqib's view was to empower transgendered, to give a way to pull them out of misery by giving them a respectable mean of earning* (mgt 2). The participant shared how leadership identified and empowered the employees. *They have a natural talent… and she made her place* (Appendix: mgt 2). Basically Akhuwat's core rule is 'empowerment' of the needy not to make them habitual of taking alms. *The transgender employees have shown a positive change. Now they are eager to learn more. They ask questions to understand things. So, knowledge brings up motivation in people. You can give them more money or make their jobs more colorful, but unless you do not educate them for differentiating between right or wrong things, they can go back to the previous state* (mgt 3).

*You must have visited their monthly function where they are given opportunity to learn and perform different things. Further, we are thinking about involving them into loan recovery activities also. However, right now it is under process* (mgt 4). *They are working at this elderly age just to earn for their livelihood. We should not charge them for mess, what profit or benefit the organization can get by charging just 15 rupees of mess. This is basically confidential information. We do not share whom we are charging for mess or not. So, nobody else feels it. Even if somebody peeks in to get to know such information, his/her explanation will be called* (mgt 4).

Talking about the Akhuwat leadership, the transgender employees expressed their view as: w*e come here at 9 and work till 5 in the evening. Dr. Amjad Saqib designed this work for us here. We thank God that we are here. Everybody here respect us a lot, doctor sb (Amjad Saqib) and madam and all others* (trg3).

*Yes of course. I have met him. Whenever he comes downstairs he always comes up to meet us. He knows me by name. Every month we meet him at Marhaba for the function of transgender, where we get stipend of 500 rupees. When we were not doing job we were given a stipend of 1100 rupees. Now as we are employed, 500 rupees are given to us and give us free lunch* (trg3).

*Yes, very often I meet him. He calls me as 'Rekha' with love. He is all good. Everything in him is good. Even if there is anything bad, we like it too. In one function he asked me, if you will leave this job where will you go? I know the work of beauty*

*parlor too. But I said to him that I will never leave this job till I die. I said I will go to no other organization. I am all set here.* (trg5).

In his speech Managing Director-Akhuwat Dr. Amjad Saqib explicitly mentioned his individualized consideration for the transgender people as: *but at least they felt that there is somebody who cares for them, who feels for their needs and emotions… (Appendix:* Speech 2).

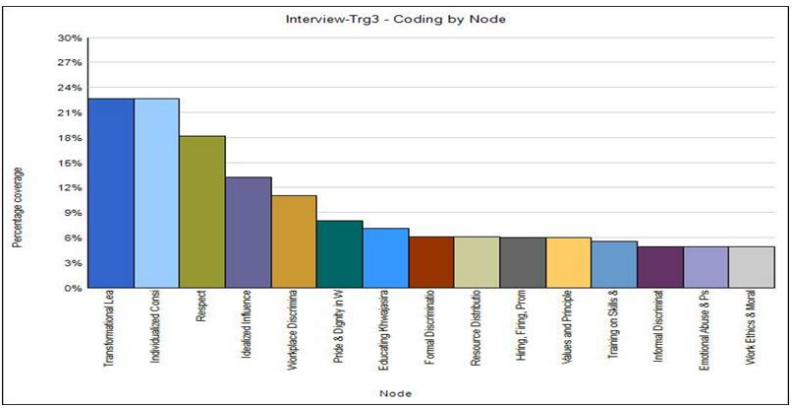


**Chart 11.** *Coding by Node 'Individualized Consideration' -(Data Source: Interview)*

## Inspirational Motivation

The leadership acts as inspirational motivator for the employees. The questions were asked how does the leadership talk about the future as what further needs to be accomplished? How the vision of the future is articulated by the leadership?

The employees working closely with the transgender employees told that *now after knowing about the Khawajsira support program and its successful outcomes. Few organizations are giving job opportunities to transgendered…* (Mgt1). *So, in our society there are stereotyping against them which is breaking now. Another step we undertook was to bring children from SOS and arrange an interaction with the khawjasira employees. As Akhuwat has signed an MOU with SOS. So clothes for SOS children are also prepared by the transgender… So wanted that khwajasira should make a connection with the children so they may learn for whom they are doing this work. So it was important that you should know whom your work is*

*benefitting… So their motivation comes from that they are working for deprived people* (Mgt2).

How the management decision of giving employment to transgender was taken by other employees? Was it forcefully asserted that you all have to accept the decision? *No, everybody accepted it with open heart. It was not imposed on us or we were pressurized in any sense. When the management has taken a decision then everybody has to follow. Nobody created any conflict* (Mgt4).

*All the people have this vision. See, everything turns salt in salt mine. So when they come here the values, culture and environment of the organization have strong impact on them. When they are outside Akhwuat they do not realize such things. When they see Doctor sahib and see that he lives in rented house, he lives a very simple life, he eats simple food, may be you must be eating better food than what the eats. He is not show-off or spendthrift. Whatever he does it is for Allah SWT. For that it is important to have strong faith. This place is a test for us and we have to go back to Him* (Mgt4).

*We designed 2-3 orientations of the employees. Even Dr. Amjad Saqib took us to transgender houses where they live just to show in what misery they are living their lives. In order build acceptance in me for the transgender he took me to their houses, I started crying and doctor sahib need not motivate me any further. And then I was able to transfer my motivation to other employees* (Mgt8).

A transgender employee said: *they treat us well and they brought us on right path. In the beginning it was tough to learn new things as I had never done any such thing before… Now we know that our work is expanding to many other cities too. As madam told you another branch is going to open in Rawalpindi. So thanks God that we are progressing* (Trg2).

*…I wake up every day with new zeal to go to work. Now people in my area ask me, where do you go daily, we do not see much of you wandering around begging. I tell them I was jobless at that time, now I have a job to go to… people respect me and appreciate a lot. They invite me on tea and meals* (TRG4).

The speech extracts of Dr. Amjad saqib at different events shows how inspirational and motivational his words are for the employees. *Social Justice… same old dream we are dreEmp2g again. Dreams that are conceived in mosque are not only dreams but also prayers* (Appendix: Speech Transcription2).

## Intellectual Stimulation

What measures the leadership take to stimulate intellect in the employees? How does the leadership seek differing perspectives when solving problems? An interviewee expressed his/her views as: *He always does a different thing. Likewise, when he initiated this, our team welcomed his endeavor. As this was a unique thing to do* (Mgt1).

With reference to the transgender employees they are intellectually stimulated when visitors meet them and when they go to visit in different social events. *Then when speakers or students come, they had interaction with them. So that was a new thing for them. They never have been in a courteous environment in their life* (Mgt1). The transgender support program itself and the employment of transgender at Akhuwat has even long term effects on different sects of society. *I haven't met any person who came here in visit and was not moved with the idea that transgender are respectfully employed here* (Mgt2).

Keeping in view future demands the transgender employees are being taught different skills. *Future Now we are trying to make them learn counting as there is a task of counting the number of packs and then registering them. For their learning they were told what Akhuwat is about? What they are doing? Why is it important what you are doing for Akhuwat? A part from their skills and expertise, they have minimum knowledge of things, so they should learn new things. We try to work for their capacity building according to their interest* (Mgt2).

In order to break the stereotypes, set in the society, organization thinks it is eminent to refine their image for which character building is important. *They should build their character and refine their lives. Unless your character is not refined people will not take you seriously. If your character is fine people will respect you. People will not hoot. Even if someone comment or give remark 10 times, you should not say anything, 11th time he will not bother you* (Mgt3)

The positive environment of the organization has brought positive work behaviors in transgender employees. *Now they are eager to learn more. They ask questions to understand things. So, knowledge brings up motivation in people. You can give them more money or make their jobs more colorful, but unless you do not educate them for differentiating between right*

*or wrong things, they can go back to the previous state… Then we make them compare their life now with the past. Then they will be able to earn more money than now. But when do they had more peace, now or then? So they say now they feel more respected… I always try to bring positive change in others around me. What so ever I know is right I try to bring that in people* (Mgt3).

The participants were asked about the measures taken to make employees understand and welcome the inclusion of transgender employees in the organization. *We designed 2-3 orientations of the employees. Even Dr. sahib took us to transgender houses …and then I was able to transfer my motivation to other employees* (Appendix: Mgt8).

## Workplace Discrimination

### Formal Discrimination

### HR Policy and Practices

When the leadership decides to bring diversity in the workforce, it is needed to take measures in HR policy and practices. Such policies and practices need to focus on reducing workplace discrimination which is an important constraint in bringing workforce diversity.

The participants were asked about the HR policies and practices. *At every place the HR person will devise few rules and regulation and determine norms of the workplace* (mgt 1). *So that is how we made them follow timings. Then we bound them on leave i.e. you cannot just stay home and take leave from work. You have to inform the office before.*

*So gradually they learn all e.g. they are not supposed to talk loud in office. And if you have conflicts with anyone, discuss with me. Do not take up the matter on your own. You are as a team here. Correct one another when someone is doing wrong. The conflicts will affect your work. Help out each other and take criticism in positive way. Do not make it an ego issue* (Mgt3). Regarding leave structure: *We allow 2 leaves in a month. If they take more leaves then their one-day salary will be deducted* (Mgt3).

When HR manager was asked what the implications for HR were when the transgender employees were hired, he replied: *it has no implication for HR… No difference. They follow working time and other things too. It is just that they take leaves on and off, so their pay is deducted for that* (Mgt4).

Another HR personnel told us about the HR implications as: *there are multiple HR policies however no such compiled copy of manual is available. No employment policy is given to employees… No documentation of transgender employees has been prepared. There are no files or record maintained. They are kind of informal employees… The internees work for limited time. Means the informal employees in Akhuwat are just the transgender (*Mgt 5).

What salary and benefits improvements could be given to such informal employees? The respondent said: *we can increase their salary but not given the benefits as they are temporary employees. Same different banks practice, they get employees through third party who works for salary only they are not entitled for any benefits etc* (Mgt 5).

How many employees are working in the organization currently? *Employees throughout the branches of Akhuwat are 2900. The transgender employees are almost 10 in number* (Mgt 5). When transgender employees joined Akhuwat, was any circular sent to other employees? *No such formal circular of policy change was sent to employees in Akhuwat* (Mgt 5).

Were any changes in the policies made after transgender employees joined Akhuwat. The respondent replied: *It is not approved by the board yet. As it was just one amendment so it could not be sent for separate approval. They had gone on strike once; somebody had pumped them to make a union and go on strike. Then afterwards they apologized too but Dr. sahib said no they are not the kind of transgender who will be able to go with the Akhuwat spirit of brotherhood. They were fired to set an example for others too. Two were fired and rest two said that we were trapped by people just to have fun that transgender employees are on strike in Akhuwat. So they all four sat in the ground in front of* A k *huwat office and displayed their strike to public. Although they were very hardworking people however they have not been taken back. Even now they repent. Although they still come in our monthly function of transgender support function. You know people take advantage and do not let go of any opportunity to make fun of them. Even rest of the*

*transgender also had soft corner for them, like they said sir let it go now they have realized their mistake* (Mgt8).

Was any circular sent to all employees after the transgender employees went on strike? The respondent said: *as far as I remember we had informally communicated to our staff about the incident and the aftermath of it, maybe there was an office order released… I know many a times informal instructions were given but I do not remember about the formal circular.*

## Salary and Benefits

Salary and benefits are also important in assessing discriminatory behaviors in the organization. The transgender employees are also associated with the Transgender Support Program therefore they get benefits given to all transgender who are registered in the program. *As they are associated with Akhuwat Transgender Khwajasira support Program, they get a monthly stipend every month. A function for them is arranged at Marhaba every month where they have a chance to meet people from their community and enjoy free meal and get a stipend. In addition, they get a free medical checkup. Later on, it is planned to give them a permanent status too. However, for that many things need to be established with the donors etc. so that is in the pipeline. Khwajasira are fine with these fringe benefits. They get monthly clothes from the cloth bank too. Whatever they like they can take home* (Mgt2). *Our pay scale is very much below the market scale. Other organizations basically are taking interest on loans they are doing business, we are not doing business. As we are not working for profit, we are doing our jobs like we do our prayers… We give them (loan officers) 7000 rupees as salary. We give them fringe benefits as deal allowance, quarterly*

*allowance, Eid allowance, education allowance and Hafiz allowance. In addition, we have given them telephone facility. We have issued them a health card 'Takaful Benefit Card'. We have given them 'Group Life Benefit'. In case of death, the employee's family is given 5 lacs rupees* (Mgt4).

When asked about the salary and benefits given to the transgender employees, the HR manager told us; *basically we defined their salary. We give them health facility and they get medical checkup every weekly. We give them traveling allowance 1000 rupees and 1000 rupees is the monthly allowance*

*given to them. Otherwise their pay scale is 8000 rupees. Now you must have talked to them that they pray for us that they have a respectable job here. They have become respectable* (Mgt4).

However, taking transgender employees' perspective into consideration, salary and benefits is a big issue for them. There were differences among the management and the transgender employees in the past. A transgender employee told us; *We had 8000 rupees' salary… the thing is that I cannot go anywhere else as I am a patient.* (Appendix: Trg5)

How much salary they are being paid? The answer from a transgender employee was; *No, it is 8000 rupees. But whenever any visitor asks us, we tell them 10,000 rupees as we know it will be increased. No one said us to tell that our salary is 10,000 rupees, we feel ashamed by telling others that we work for such low salary of 8000 rupees only. They say that you are working for such low salary and make fun of us* (Trg5.).

## Resource Distribution

Equal and fair distribution of organization resources is another element where discrimination might show up. During interview many aspects relating to the resource distribution were discussed by the participants. When it was decided to employ transgender in Akhuwat, the management thought what tasks or job can be given to them as they are mostly uneducated. It was found that they are good in color sense and stitching therefore the cloth bank department was assigned to them to work in. for further improvement in work they were given trainings. *They have a natural talent… so after the assessment process, she was given the loan. And then she established a stitching unit in her house* (Appendix: Mgt2)

The male employees offer prayers in the masjid inside the Akhuwat office. The question was asked that what if the transgender employees want to offer prayers in the masjid too? What if they feel shy that they do not want to offer prayers with the male employees? A participant said; *even then there is no issue, after male employees offer prayers in jamat (as males have to offer prayers in jamat) the transgender employees can offer prayers as the masjid is free after jamat* (Mgt7).

## Career Development

Career development is to manage one's career in an intra-organizational or inter-organizational scenario involving training on new skills, moving to higher job responsibilities, making a career change within the same organization, moving to a different organization or starting one's own business. Interviews with the participants also highlighted career development aspects such that transgender employees are trained for different skills. They are also given loans if they want to set up their own business. Another important aspect is that, Akhuwat and Fountain House train the transgender and teach them mannerism and etiquettes required for professional grooming. Different organizations then contact Akhuwat and Fountain House if they intend to employ transgender people. E*ven, I have been asked now that I should refer few assertive natured transgender too. So they can be appointed as loan officers in Akhuwat…* (Mgt1).

*That they have a natural talent with the clothes and color sense., why not give them the sewing machines and make them clothes as a business. We had a success story, there was a transgender who had this in mind that she will not restrict herself to here. So he learnt all the work. Akhuwat used to give them paid training. After that she asked for the loan. That was the first time any transgender asked for loan. So after the assessment process she was given the loan. And then she established a stitching unit in her house* (Mgt2). *3 transgender have switched to some other organizations recently due to good job opportunities and they are doing well over there. So they do switch jobs to seek better opportunities. We do ask our visitors too, to identify if there is any good opportunity for them, so we send them there. We can employ more transgender and then train them and work with them* (Mgt3). *Now we are trying to make them learn counting… capacity building according to their interest* (Appendix: Mgt2).

The transgender career development is a multi-dimensional endeavor ranging from their behavioral training to the skill development. *They should build their character and refine their lives. Unless your character is not refined people will not take you seriously. If your character is fine people will respect you. People will not hoot. Even if someone comment or give remark 10 times, you should not say anything, 11$^{th}$ time he will not bother you* (Mgt3). *We have plan for their skill development but*

*right now we are short of funds. We also give them loans and employment. More will come up in future* inshallah (Mgt6).

## Training

### Training on Skills & Behavior

Training is very important for transgender employees as most of them have not worked in organizations. There are two fold trainings given to them i.e. one for improving their skills and other is to improve their behavior so they may understand how to behave at workplace.

*Then when speakers or students come, they had interaction with them. So that was a new thing for them. They never have been in a courteous environment in their life… Look, we have to understand that different levels have different mind sets. Now the doctors/psychologists have a level and the dispenser has a level, sweeper and sanitary worker or even patients here have different orientation. so the transgender have been told how to behave* (Mgt1).

Even the transgender whom Akhuwat is referring to work in other organizations are given training beforehand. *Whoever we are refereeing to any organization, we are properly training them first* (Mgt1). *The main task was to train them. Because given their life style their exposure is very different, they don't know discipline, they don't know how to talk, or if someone is talking to you what tone he is using* (Mgt2).

*We arranged a paid training for them for stitching. Their lunch was free for them. Someone is good at stitching else is good at packing etc. so a supervision is required to use the talents of all. Although organizations are coming forward to arrange workshops for them however how things should be planned, it will take time to arrange such workshops for them… When they join here, we train them give them some time to learn the work and then slowly start giving them targets* (Mgt2).

*They should build their character and refine their lives. Unless your character is not refined people will not take you seriously. If your character is fine people will respect you. People will not hoot. Even if someone comment or give remark 10 times, you should not say anything, 11th time he will not bother you* (Mgt3).

*The only issue is that from the very young age they had been shifted to the guru place and absorbed the environment and pictured themselves in a certain role. They could not groom*

*themselves in any better way. Nobody is there to tell them the right and wrong and character building etc. now when they are taught, they realize that they should change* (Mgt3).

*So that is our moral framework. We train people on the same and ask employees to follow these. So you can elaborate it as much as you want, these will be inculcated more finely* (Mgt6). *We have seen that given them the targets they will surely meet all the targets. However, it is important to give them training. Which I think corporate sector will find time consuming… There is a certain way to dress up, to speak, the manners. So, all these elements should be considered to groom them for work environment* (Mgt7).

Was any training given to other employees before the transgender employees joined the organization? *Yes, of course but that was informal as the training department has been functional actively since last one year. Training was focused on how to talk to them, how to deal with them and they face number of serious challenges in the society* (Mgt8)

*First they came here and as you must have seen when food is distributed among poor they try to get as much for themselves as they could dragging away others and such an odd scene was created here. But now they are being told that this luncheon is for you and there is sufficient available so you should gracefully fill up your plates and eat nicely. Now they do not let even a single rice grain fall on the floor* (Speech Transcription1).

## Educating transgender (Khwajasira) & other employees

Besides training on skills and behaviors, another important factor highlighted in the responses was of education. Educating both the transgender and other employees will bring longterm change in the workplace as well as in the society. The stereotypes will be broken and a healthy relationship will be build. As Akhuwat is based on a social work, society has great impact on its decisions. Likewise, Akhuwat' decisions will cast a strong impact on the society. When the transgender go out with other employees in any function, people give remarks on the employees.

*Sometimes it is felt a little odd in such a way that when they come with us on any function then our other friends outside Akhuwat give comment on us* (Emp1). *What they are doing is to eliminate poverty. I do not want to talk about this in much detail. I did not like khwajasiras very much. Khwajasira are not like by any in the region I belong to. I belong to Khushaab. When I*

*came here I felt good. I felt that they are respectable* (Emp2). *And even Dr AS when used to do meetings with us, they always talked about this project and tried to make our minds to accept that program. That this program is going to be started and I request your help in this. He always used to portray it that these people are deserving, we never respected them* (Mgt1). Also she/he added; *secondly, whenever I interact with other employees I make them understand the Khwajasira perspective. Like wherever I go my driver asks me, madam what kind of thing you have got yourself into* (Mgt1).

There are many good things that other employees could learn from the transgender employees. *I have applied few tests of anxiety and depression but they do not have any such issues. They are very lively people. They have seen much harsh and sorrow in life* (Mgt1).

*Even community gave positive response to them. Like one transgender employee told us that while coming on duty to Akhuwat, the rikshaw driver did not take money from him that he is doing noble act of earning with dignity and respect* (Mgt2).

*For healthy interaction you have to first understand their mindsets, their environment, their likes and dislikes, their life style, how do they interact with each other and what kind of people do they like. Then you will be able to break the ice and have a healthy interaction with them* (Mgt2). Then we make them compare their life now with the past.

Then they will be able to earn more money than now. But when do they had more peace, now or then? So they say now they feel more respected (Mgt3).

The Executive Director Akhuwat educated his employees about the conditions the transgender people are suffering in and prepared his employees to accept them with open arms as equal. *He first prepares us to realize why the decision is needed. He told us the misery these people are going through and the level of grooming they received from their environment. He said even if they (transgender) misbehave or do not understand something, you have to treat them politely and with patience* (Mgt3).

*Basically the difference comes with education. The educated people understand reality and do not abuse of disrespect transgender. They are the uneducated people who disgrace them. No dignified and respectable person will ever humiliate or mock anyone* (Mgt4).

Again the guiding principles are the code of ethics set by the leadership. Every educational effort will sprout from these values and principals. *Dr. Amjad Saqib has devised code of ethics for his staff... no smoking environment* (Appendix: Mgt5). *After employees are selected we make them go through training, …We have a vision, objectives, practices, principles, 25-30 values. So this whole gives an Akhuwat framework. So employees work under this umbrella and grow* (Appendix: Mgt6).

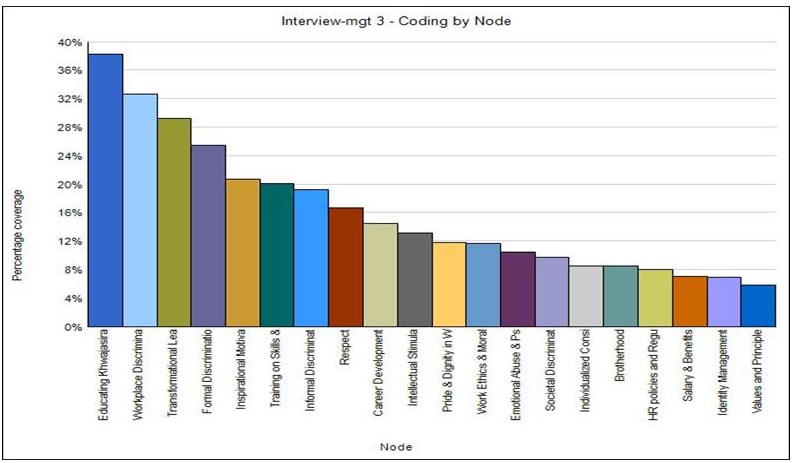


**Chart 12.** *Coding by Node 'Educating Employees'- (Data Source: Interview)*

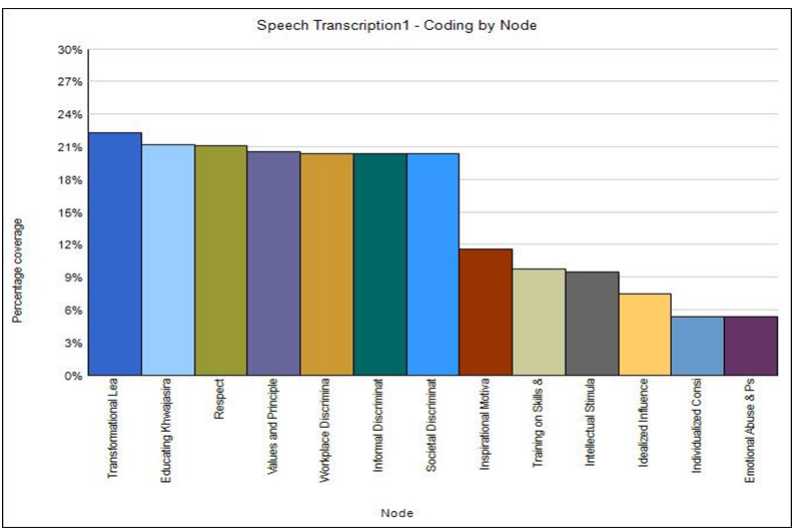

**Chart 13.** *Coding by Node 'Educating Employees'- (Data Source: Interview)*

## Conflict management, Grievance handling & Harassment

Another important element that need to be taken care of when addressing the issue of workplace discrimination is that there should be devised a set procedure for complaint registration, grievance handling, harassment and conflict management.

When question was asked on measures taken to reporting of grievances and protection against harassment etc., a participant said: *people can talk, don't they comment on us females. We are being harassed. But the thing is that you have to become strong and assertive* (Mgt1).

For effective conflict management these values and teachings play pivotal role. *Do not take up the matter on your own. You are as a team here. Correct one another when someone is doing wrong. The conflicts will affect your work. Help out each other and take criticism in positive way. Do not make it an ego issue* (Ingterview-Mgt3).

These values further ensure to rule out chances of grievances and harassment in the workplace. Basically, strong set of values and principles are the driving force behind most of the matters.

*I have been working with them since 6 months no body reported anything to me yet. We are so frank with them and do talk about many things. We ask them if any person has ever hooted them or gave bad comments etc, they say no body did any such* thing (Mgt7).

There is an obvious need to design harassment policy where there are multiple gender identities working in the organization. *So these are all the things. One was Alex, she tried to touch us and behave odd… but it was harmless gestures that everybody took lightly* (Appendix: Mgt8).

A well-defined grievance handling system could save the organization any hassle of strikes and at the same time the employees would have felt they were being heard. However, it is the value of brotherhood that is supporting the system in absence of any grievance handling practices. They (transgender employees) had gone on strike once; somebody had pumped them to make a union and go on strike. Then afterwards they apologized too but Doctor sahib said no they are not the kind of transgender who will be able to go with the Akhuwat spirit of brotherhood. They were fired to set an example for others too.

Two were fired and rest two said that we were trapped by people just to have fun that transgender employees are on strike in Akhuwat. So they all four sat in the ground in front of Akhuwat office and displayed their strike to public. Although they were very hardworking people however they have not been taken back. Even now they repent. Although they still come in our monthly function of transgender support function. You know people take advantage and do not let go of any opportunity to make fun of them. Even rest of the transgender also had soft corner for them, like they said sir let it go now they have realized their mistake (Mgt8).

## Hiring, Firing, Promotion & Demotion

Clear rules on hiring, firing, promotion and demotion further formalize the structure. The transgender appointments are reference based. However, vacancies are advertised in newspaper or website for other positions. A question on the selection and recruitment procedure of the transgender employees was answered by HR personnel as: *…the jobs advertised are not focusing on them …they are recruited on reference basis. As our strong ambassador among the Khwajasira community guide us to the right person. She/he tells us sir this person will not leave begging; this is just not serious etc… We try to take khwajasira of middle age or those who are not well, so to help them out this way. Some not so good-looking khwajasira just are bound in doing household chores as they are not so beautiful so they cannot do dancing etc. disheartened they feel and accept Akhuwat's call with honesty* (mgt 8).

*Our guru is Mgt1 Butt. She goes to the monthly event of Khwajasiras Support Program' held at Fountain House since 4 years. So from there Mgt1 Butt came to know about this job and she suggested us if anyone want to do a job they can. I liked the idea and I applied for the job. People in Akhuwat treated us very warmly* (Trg2).

## Informal Discrimination

### Inclusion in Work Related Social Events

The transgender employees are included in different work related social events. The researcher has visited the grand loan disbursement program held at Badshahi Masjid Lahore where more than 10,000 borrowers were given loan. The Transgender

employees also attended that function. *Yes, they do participate. The parties are not such dance party kind of, so the remain decent and well behaved* (Emp2). *We also went to a function where celebrities gave them certificates. So that was very motivational for them not because any celebrity gave them the certificates but because their names were mentioned on the certificates i.e. they were acknowledged* (Mgt2).

## Identity Management & Gender Specific Trait Roles

The transgender is Pakistan are different in their social life in their dressing, behaviors, etc. when they are employed in the organization there is need to make them understand how to manage their gender identity so not to invite negative comments and absurd behaviors from other employees. The organization is planning to employ transgender people as loan officers or loan recovery officers which are a job being given to male employees currently. The job requires certain gender specific trait roles. *Even, Akhuwat has asked me now that I should give them assertive natured transgender too. So they can be appointed as loan officers in Akhuwat. A little problem with them is that they are sensitive natured people, like they do not know motor cycle driving. And for that job they require someone who can drive motor cycle* (Mgt1).

When the participants were asked what pronouns are used while talking to the transgender employees, they told that the transgender employees do not mind such things. *No, we say like brothers and sisters. They themselves sometimes call each other with male pronouns and sometimes with female. They do not mind such things and take them very lightly and enjoy such things instead* (Mgt3).

The participants were inquired how the transgender employees understand the dress code etc.? *There is a certain way to dress up, to speak, the manners. So, all these elements should be considered to groom them for work environment* (Mgt7).

## Limited interaction with employees & group cohesion

However, the environment of Akhuwat is supported by strong value system and educated employees, still it was thought to have a minimum interaction between transgender

and other employees to avoid any discrimination in the beginning. *However, when taking this initiative, it was necessary that we isolate them from other. We should not abruptly impose it on other employees to accept them. Slowly and gradually employees were made to absorb the change* (Mgt2). This isolation has made transgender employees alienated.

*Employees were asked not to talk to them unnecessarily. You know the way they are treated on footpaths; you cannot change and control everything all of a sudden. So, till the initial time the interaction of transgender was limited to the main people who are directly working with them only … Now we arrange visits of employees and interns from different other branches and sections of the organization so make them see what work is being handled by these transgender here in the department. So, we encourage transgender to interact with the visitors too. Now they become very happy and talk to the visitors and get their pictures taken* (Mgt2).

Now the transgender have developed more group cohesion and they feel less linked to other employees. During the lunch hour, in mess they try to sit together with other transgender employees*. But they try to take separate table for themselves. That is their own wish to sit among the group members* (Mgt2).

Even so the person who was in direct dealing with the transgender employees felt restricted in freely interacting with the transgender, …*in the beginning it was isolated environment… Slowly and gradually I started talking to them.* (Mgt3).

It was observed that the transgender employees felt hesitated in sitting on tables in the mess during lunch hour. It was further found that they have been sitting on terrace to have lunch together. When they were asked why they could not sit on table inside the mess, they said how we could sit with male employees (Few are MTF transgender).

## Emotional Abuse & Psychological Distress

As the Transgender are abandoned sect of society they are normally disgraced and subject to emotional abuse in the society. The interviews have fetched some interesting facts. An interviewee has played pivotal role in reaching the transgender and persuading them to come to join Khwajasira Support Program. Her stance is*: look, we have to understand that different levels have different mind sets. Now the*

*doctors/psychologists have a level and the dispenser has a level, sweeper and sanitary worker or even patients here have different orientation. so transgender have been told how to behave… People can talk, don't they comment on us females. We are being harassed. But the thing is that you have to become strong and assertive* (Mgt1).

*Backbiting people do a lot even of the prime minister. We are common man. There is possibility that they give us respect and love at our face and call names at our back… here in Akhuwat, many transgender are working so no hooting or disrespectful comments we hear here. And even if someone hoots us, we ignore him. There will be no use of replying to such person. He/she will hoot more. This is a good organization where transgender can work …I was so desperate and used to have suicidal thoughts. I was actually about to commit suicide that somebody told me about… Akhuwat* (Trg5).

Executive Director Akhuwat highlighted the emotional distress and agony of transgender persons. *Who want to seek a family but nobody is there to hug them, console them and take care of them. They are so much deprived that we as a society never miss a chance of mocking them. They go to hospital for medical treatment and there people make fun of them. They pass by in the streets are people mock them. They even want to be friends with someone and people do not return their affection* (Speech Transcription1).

This speech is also giving message to the employees to treat the transgender workers nicely.

## Social Discrimination

The workplace discrimination has roots in the discrimination against the transgender persons in the society. Unless the society changes and accept them, workplace discrimination cannot be eliminated but only controlled. When employees go back to their homes after all days' work, people around them give remarks etc. such elements affect their work behaviors too.

*Sometimes it is felt a little odd in such a way that when they come with us on any function then our other friends outside Akhuwat give comment on us* (Intervire-Emp1).

*Still my male friends get angry with me and say what kind of insane work you have got involved into. You are such a sound psychologist and what work are you doing with transgender. Although I am quite bold, so I resisted them all* (Mgt1). *Some*

*transgender are educated… I think the only thing that is stopping them from work is the attitude of the society. Like, if you will talk to them, they will tell you how they were thrown out of their families at an early age. And they left school because people were making fun of them (*Mgt2).

*This is a gap in our society. Our so called Ulema (preachers) do not focus on such things but just creates differences among human beings. There is one knowledgeable man in our village who only considers all living beings respectable and honorable despite the fact that our village environment is conservative and feudal. There is a big gap between the Islamic scholars and the true spirit of Islam …The fault is at both sides, neither have they wanted to come nor does society wants to accept them. Whatever happens with them is a nature thing, that fact should be accepted and society should take part in grooming them instead of abandoning them* (Mgt7).

# 7. Discussion

To begin with the discussion, it will be appropriate to reproduce the research questions and proposition so to align the discussion. The research questions addressed in this discussion are: what are the challenges for the organization employing transgender persons? How can an organization address the issue of workplace discrimination upon inclusion of transgender employees? What is the role of leadership in addressing the issue of workplace discrimination for transgender employees? Further the proposition statement of this study: Transformational leadership can transform employees to address workplace discrimination against transgendered in the organization.

The findings of the study indicate that the organization employing transgender persons will face multiple challenges. Workforce diversity management challenges based on gender identity will grow when the third gender will be added in the workforce. The challenges are basically result of differences among transgender community's sensitivities and the societal sensitivities. Society has set certain norms and roles associated with the genders i.e. male and female. The transgender persons break that norm and come out as something challenging these

roles. Thus, there are many factors that need to be taken care of in employing them. The organization has to consider both the societal sensitivities as well as the sensitivities of transgender community. Psychologically they are as soft-natured and sensitive as female, and physically as strong as male.

Societal discrimination for transgender community is deep rooted in societal norms and values. The organization will also have a challenge to educate all the organizations it has alliance or dealing with. Social institutions outside the workplace plays an important role in the workplace discrimination (Dispenza *et al.,* 2012). There will be need to build social understanding on the issues the transgender communities are facing. What contribution the organizations should be making to benefit the transgender persons as well as the organization. It could be an important element in their corporate social responsibility efforts that organizations should play its role for economic, social and emotional uplift of this minority group who is deprived of their basic human rights since long.

In Pakistan mostly the transgender people are uneducated or have a very basic education level. They have been abandoned by their families at a very young age and have been raised by guru. The organizations will have to initially focus on their grooming with respect to hygiene, behaviors, work ethics and other norms. Also, there is need to train them for job specific skills and educate them about their rights in the organization, career counselling, and getting basic education. On the other hand, organization will have to educate its other employees too. Leadership will have to conduct multiple sessions to make employees understand about the transgender communities and their sensitivities. Why their behaviors are different and what is their background? How they should be treated and what factors need to be taken care of while dealing with them. The employees will be taught to keep objective based interaction with transgender employees.

Literature supports that transgender employees suffer from discrimination in the workplace. Studies on discrimination shows both formal (e.g., hiring, promotions) and informal (e.g., social interaction) discrimination against LGBTs is prevalent in business organizations (Morris, 2014). This was not always the case with the participants of our study. Reason is that the organization understudy took a big and bold initiative of employing the transgender persons. It was the organization that

reached the transgender communities to persuade them and their gurus so they may get registered for the 'Khwajasira Support Program'. Later these registered khwajasiras were offered job at Akhuwat Cloth Bank. The participants feel respected and recognized as the organization has taken care of them by providing job opportunity to them. They are so thankful to the organization that they do not bother any discrimination, even if it exists. They are content and do not ask for anything more.

Another important element is the age factor of the transgender employees. They are mostly in between 40-50 years and above. At this age they do not have much economic opportunities so they are settled for this job. Besides, they have been facing discrimination all their life, now it is not such a big deal for them to tolerate the same in the workplace.

It is eminent to mention about the personality of transgender employees. It is the researcher's observation that most of the transgender employees working in Akhuwat are non-aggressive, submissive and composed personalities. As they do not have any formal education they have settled for whatever they could get. They are ignorant of their rights, career paths, or more opportunities in the market. In fact, it is the organization (Akhuwat) that is guiding them for better job opportunities in the market. All the transgender persons working in Akhuwat are MTF i.e. having dominant female attributes. They are easy to get hurt therefore the leadership has developed understanding among the employees to treat them politely and softly. As part of their career growth, it is planned to recruit more transgender persons for the job of loan officer. However, the loan officer job requires more gender specific trait role. The shy, submissive and soft natured transgender persons are not expected to go in the field and take up tough job of loan officer. For the loan recovery and disbursement job, the organization is requiring more strong and assertive traits in addition to the ability to ride a bike. Gender specific trait role can be difficult for the transgender candidates. However, Akhuwat is searching for the transgender people who could be tough enough to take up the job.

Although discrimination in an individual's personal–social life and in the workplace can be explicit, this study revealed some implicit forms of discrimination. Bartlett (2009) identifies that discrimination in workplace is mostly implicit and more ambiguous thus difficult to prove. This discrimination has been disguised in the sympathy the employees of Akhuwat feel for the

transgender employees. The organization is highly concerned that if they have taken an initiative they should not fall short of expectations. It is not tolerable to do anything that may potentially hurt the organization's good intentions, goodwill, values and principles. In order to safeguard the transgender employees against any unfavorable circumstances that may discourage them, the management decided to introduce them in different phases. In initial phase the transgender employees were asked not to interact with other employees but only those who are directly dealing with them.

The intention was to save them from any unfavorable incident. However, the same precautionary step marked a hard line between the transgender employees and other employees. The transgender employees although are very much bonded to the organization feel alienated among other employees. This lead to more group cohesion among the transgender employees and they like to move together, whether it is lunch time or morning assembly they stand together. Discrimination at organization level also includes structural considerations (Kanter, 1977; Lefkowitz, 1994). The transgender employees working in Akhuwat are informal employees in the organization therefore do not have benefits as given to formal employees. Structural improvements will bring them a formal employment status. The organization is working to make them formal by offering them jobs of loan officers.

Literature supports disclosing gender identity may increase potential for workplace discrimination by employers and coworkers (Badgett,1996). The discrimination against transgender persons can stress them to hide their gender identity. However, the participants of our study are confident of their gender identity and do not under go any fear to keep their identity hidden. Contrary to the studies suggests that transgender people feel shy and fear to disclose their gender identity. However, they do follow the dress code in the workplace. They dress up gracefully and do not over do the makeup etc.

There is sufficient evidence of having strong role of the leadership in the organization. The leadership style of the Executive Director Akhuwat is transformational leadership. His charisma is hidden in his simple and down-to-earth personality. The reflection of his personality and beliefs is evident in the 'values & principles' he has set for the organization. There is a set of values and principles that everyone in Akhuwat is ought to

learn and observe not only in their workplace but their personal life too. It is more like 'code of ethics' that govern the overall perspective on life and how human beings are supposed to live. One of the values which plays most important role is the element of 'respect' and 'brotherhood' he shows for human beings regardless of the differences in creed, color, gender or any worldly division of human race. The values, norms and beliefs of people are a basic driving element that influence the actions and behaviors in a social setting like an organization, besides the socially constructed behaviors associated with gender identities (Dietert, & Dentice, 2009).

The Akhuwat leadership is more like an educator, a trainer, a mother who teaches and train her child so to make him capable enough to live prosperous life. The element of 'educating the transgender and other employees' is an important factor in controlling workplace discrimination. When the employees are educated about the social, economic, emotional and health issues the transgender people are facing, they realize the gravity of their sufferings and how badly they are affected. They learn to respect the transgender employees for their courage to leave beggary. They learn to facilitate them in their jobs so they may continue to work with dignity. On the other hand, the transgender employees are educated about the work ethics, the appropriate behaviors expected at the workplace.

They are told to take stand for themselves and prove they can work in an organization with dignity and honor. They learn to respect others so to be respected. The literature supports that learning plays a crucial role in reducing workplace discrimination issues, whereas the barriers to learning perpetuates the discrimination at workplace (Wooten & James, 2004). Not only the employees, but the Akhuwat leadership is playing pivotal role in educating the masses to help reducing the societal discrimination. Every month the meeting of Khwajasira Support Program is used as a platform to educate society about the transgender community, the progress of the project and its impact of the transgender community. Such event raises awareness in society to intrigue them to play their role to betterment of transgender community. In the Khwajasira Support Program, the registered khwajasiras are given monthly stipend and free health services. Further they are groomed and given basic education and training so if other organizations plan to employ them, they could find more refined and well behaved transgender individuals.

The organizational culture plays an important role in expectations of discrimination (Kirby, 2006). The organizational culture is set of recurring patterns of beliefs, values and feelings prevalent in the organization. There is set of values and principles that everyone from top to bottom has to follow. In Akhuwat, the values and principles are repeatedly reinforced in daily morning assembly so that every employee learn them by heart and follow them in their routine tasks. However, there is absence of any formalized policies.

Prior researches support that discrimination in any form is hard to exist in the organizations that has devised anti-LGBT discrimination policies (Button, 2001; Ragins, 2004; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). On the other hand, other researches gives secondary importance to the formalized polices in comparison to the supportive organizational culture (Ragins, 2004; Waldo, 1999). Thus, we can say it is the collective beliefs, values and feelings prevalent in the organization that plays an important factor building a non-discrimination environment in the organization.

The chances on discrimination and harassment in terms of 'denied access to restroom' for their gender identity (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007) has been ruled out as the restroom linked to the cloth bank has been reserved for the transgender employees. Badgett, *et al.* (2007) identifies discrimination suspected in forms of; denied restroom access for their gender identity, healthcare coverage in addition to being denied employment, denied promotions, fired, and, verbal harassment, and sexual harassment. However, the discrimination on health care coverage needs modification. The organization is providing free health care to all the transgender individuals who are either registered on the 'khwajasira support program' or are employed with Akhuwat. However, mostly the transgender individuals working at Akhuwat are elderly i.e. above 50 years, thus their health issues are far beyond what the regular healthcare facilities can cover. Although the Executive Director Akhuwat is taking care of such transgender employees and paying for their treatment from his personal accounts. It is the organization that need to devise funds and policies to support healthcare of all employees.

The organization is driven through fixed values and principles. When someone is hired who has different or contrary expectations from the organization or whose values clash with

that of the organization, an unhealthy relationship will result. Same was the case when few transgender employees went on strike for a pay raise and sat in the ground outside the organization premises, instead of communicating the matter amicably in the organization. They betrayed the values of brotherhood which is a key stone of Akhuwat values and principles. Literature supports the need to have a person-organization fit in regard to the values and beliefs (Cable & Judge, 1996). Likewise, if any organization creates room for transgender employees by accepting them in their values, principles and policies only then transgender employees could work and build a healthy non-discriminatory relationship.

Regardless of the financial gains linked to CSR practices (Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003), organizations should share responsibilities of doing good for social minorities. Societal discriminatory behaviors have imposed long lasting impact on the psychology of transgender employees. They are affected by depression, anxiety and loneliness. The depression and anxiety comes out either in form of isolation from others around them or an abrupt outburst of emotions. Such behaviors certainly affect their job satisfaction, organization commitment (Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007). In case of Akhuwat, the transgender employees feel like at home. As they were abandoned by their own families, they do not have one who take care of them. When Akhuwat embraced the transgender individuals and give them employment, they feel the leadership and management is their mother and father. Their loyalty and commitment with the leadership and organization knows no boundaries. They can get salary, a monthly stipend, free lunch, free health care and free clothes from Akhuwat. There is nothing else they could wish for.

Including anti-discriminatory policies and practices are positively linked to job satisfaction and commitment (Day & Schoenrade, 2000). Contrary to that our study supports in absence of any such policy organizational culture, values and beliefs play an important role in protecting minorities against any discrimination at workplace. And their job satisfaction and organization commitment is nurtured through the values of care, respect and brotherhood.

Further the study identifies the need to take measures at macro level and micro level. Macro level changes call for laws governing equal employment opportunities and employment

non-discrimination acts. Unless laws protect the gender minorities the transgender people will be at weak footings in any organization. Likewise, micro level changes include transforming the employees (transgender employees, co-workers & management) through education, binding them by policies & practices, influencing them by values and principles. Taranowski (2008) supports educating the coworkers and management about the transgenderism.

The role of leadership in Akhuwat is strong and has influenced every individual employee. A visitor even if merely walking in the organization may notice a feel of unity, brotherhood, unconditional and unbiased concern for every human being. The way employees communicate with each other or even with visitors is highly respectable and welcoming. The leadership has spread its color all over the premises of the organization. In entrance pigeons and birds daily come to get food and fulfill their needs. Likewise, the needy come to the organization to get their share of money in form of loan. The furniture and ambiance of the organization gives message of simplicity, humanity, equality yet dignity and grace.

It is a whole transformation process lead by the Executive Director Akhuwat. The Akhuwat leadership influences the employees and management through it values & principles. Among the values most prominent are 'respect' and 'brotherhood'. The leadership has tied not only the employees but also the borrowers and donors in the bond of 'brotherhood'. They respect their differences and remain attached to each other. These values and strong ties make the need of HR policies and structures secondary. All the matters of career development, resource distribution, salary and benefits are resolved once Akhuwat employees developed a spirit of brotherhood. The conflicts and differences are resolved amicably.

Leadership set example for followers by showing high standards of ethics, and behaviors. Giving individualized consideration to each employee make him feel that he/she is most important in eyes of leadership. In his interview Dr. Amjad Saqib said," *See why to be suspicious of everyone. Every human person is a good human. A good person when comes an organization he will bring his good nature into the organization. So the first thing is that we do not consider anyone as a bad person, unless he proves himself to be one. So after he joins, we give tell him theses are your job description and here are*

*Akhuwat values. Then the same thing is that whatever goes into salt mine will turns salt. When you go to Masjid, you will become like people in the masjid. So we try to keep our offices clean, nobody should tell lies and everybody should treat others respectfully. So the same things are transferred to other employees".* Such confidence that human by nature is good also aids like a check on the employees that they always feel not to let down the trust and confidence the leadership put in them. This very element declines the rival theory i.e. theory X. Thus our proposition is supported i.e. transformational leadership can transform employees to address workplace discrimination against transgender persons in the organization.

# 8. Conclusion

Conclusion of the study supports a strong value system where in respect and brotherhood is observed that can undermine any workplace discrimination possibility. When the transgender employees feel respected and trusted they work more diligently thus increasing the performance. There is also identification of hidden costs the organization may incur in shape of absenteeism, poor performance and low morale in case employees are affected by psychological distress and anxiety.

Further, however strong the value system or the organization may be there is certainly need of developing a proper channel to register grievances, conflict management and harassment policy. Moreover, there will be need of investigation on compliance of workplace policies and regulations. Even if the organization has strong values & principles governing the employees' behavior and actions, there is need to check time and again to rule out any discriminatory act or behavior.

There is certainly a need to better understand transgender employees in terms of their psychological makeup, their views and perceptions about different matters. In a nutshell, the study concludes that a strong transformational leadership acts as a

coping strategy against any workplace discrimination. As the transformational leadership influences employees to focus on their current goals and further builds their inspirations and intellect this may affect their future behaviors and actions. On the other hand it also advocates that however strong the leadership may be there is a need to establish policies and formalized procedures to protect the minority against workplace discrimination.

## Theoretical Implications

There are several implications of this study. Firstly, the results of the current research extend the existing findings on the workplace discrimination literature. Still few studies found on the issues of workplace discrimination against transgender individuals. Studies on diversity and discrimination are mostly focused on more visible factors i.e. gender and race etc. whereas neglecting the experiences of invisible minorities like transgender (Priola, *et al.,* 2014). Whereas evidence supports growing discrimination against them (Minter & Daley, 2003; Oswald, Gebbie, & Culton, 2003). Reported an estimation of 15% to 57% of transgender individuals experienced some form of employment discrimination (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007).

The study establishes the role of leadership in setting the organization free from any charges of discrimination. Although prior researches have supported different coping strategies for workplace discrimination like vocational choice and work adjustments strategies (Chung, 2001), there is less role of organization leadership discussed in dealing with the issue. Our study has identified that values and principles majorly mediates the impact of transformational leadership on the workplace discrimination issues. Thus when the leadership acts as role model in his behavior and actions (idealized influence), inspires followers to foresee the future as a better time for themselves as well as the people around them, encourage the followers to think about the less fortunate people around them (intellectual stimulation) and establish core relationship with the employees to ensure they do not go directionless (individualized consideration). The leadership create an environment where followers has diverted their attention away from their self-interests only and learn to focus on the people around them.

Researches done on the subject so far has not exEmp2ed the perspective of employer in hiring transgender persons (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007). Our study has filled this gap by identifying the challenges raised for the organization employing transgender individuals. The study also fills gap in the literature by highlighting the issues of harassment. Contrary to the researches that support transgender individuals are an easy prey of harassment in the organizations (Lombardi, *et al.,* 2002), our study identifies that transgender individuals can also raise harassment issues in the organization.

## Practical Implications

The study implies changes at both the macro level and micro level. At the macro level Employment Non-Discriminatory Act should be accepted to protect transgender workers from any workplace discrimination issue. Unless any such law is passed, the transgender individuals will hesitate searching jobs in organizations. The transgender individual do not ask of any 'special rights' but 'equal rights' as being enjoyed by all other citizens. Only then they will be able to work in a discrimination-free workplace. On micro level, the organization should make changes in the vision, mission, values, principles and polices all supporting the diversity and declining chances of discrimination against any invisible or visible minority. There are number of practical implications of this study for the managers and organization. In order to manage transgender employees in the organization, managers will have to focus on their leadership skills. They will have to build such values and principles that help create a non-discriminatory organizational culture and climate. Like the values of Akhuwat provide a 360-degree coverage to all the core causes of any unethical and discriminatory behavior. "*Dr. Amjad Saqib has devised code of ethics for his staff. They are written on the notepads given to employees. These include: being nice, humble, polite, punctual, honest, passionate, tolerant, hopeful, show consistence, speak truth, build a relation based on mutual respect, do hard-work, keep cleanliness, show respect for elders and care for youngers, be expert in your field, be friendly, never misuse authority, make collective and supportive efforts, avoid useless conversations and save one's breath. Keep no smoking environment."*

Repetition of the values and principles is necessary to make them absorbed in the behavior and actions of employees. These can be displayed on walls, in diaries and in Akhuwat's way be discussed daily in morning assembly. Moreover, the leader Akhuwat repeat the same values and their importance in every speech at every social or organizational event.

The leadership will have to educate both the transgender employees as well as other employees. It is eminent to conduct educational sessions that may increase understanding among the employees on the differences among gender identities. When the employees will get to know the actual circumstances under which the transgender people are forced to live their lives, the sparse economic opportunities available to them force them to indulge in beggary and prostitution; they will respect those who want to work in the organization with dignity. Likewise, when the transgender employees will be educated to stand up for their rights and take up a dignified job; they will realize that part of the reason for discrimination comes from their unhygienic lifestyle that society disapprove of.

The manager or organization leadership will have to take initiative to make the workplace safe for the transgender employees to work in. Especially where policies on employee equality and inclusion of transgender employees is not present.

Other than the values and principles, certain organizational policies are supposed to be defined and explicitly communicated to the employees. there should be a channel devised for the transgender employees to speak up if something bothers them (Bell *et al.,* 2011).

When such policies will be in place, any external audit can set the organization free from any charge of discrimination. The same policies may be devised for other invisible minorities e.g. religious, stigmatized or disabled individuals. Such measures can fetch employee satisfaction and commitment whereas lowering the turnover rate (Tejeda, 2006).

Trainings and educational sessions play an important role in fight against discrimination, prejudice and discouraging behaviors towards transgender people. Such sessions can improve understanding and awareness among employees, support dialogue between them and minimize discrimination (Pichler *et al.,* 2010)

The polices of inclusion of transgender individuals in the organization should be openly stated so other organizations as well as the general public. This will increase awareness among

masses and may attract investors assess the organization's efforts for any possible investment.

More importantly the HR managers and personnel should be given trainings, and visits should be arranged to the place of transgender communities. This will give them a firsthand knowledge of the psychological and emotional issues, behaviors and economic conditions. They will be able to get to know the transgender individual more finely and be able to devise HR policies & practices keeping in view their sensitivities.

Implications of the study for the corporate sector organization could be the positive impact of transgender inclusive policies on the stock market (Wang & Schwarz, 2010), product market and human resource. Such non-discriminatory and transgender inclusive values, principles and polices elevate the corporate image and reputation of the organization The results of study show transgender employees are more loyal and hardworking given they are respected and treated nicely by the organization.

Organizations that have devised non-discriminatory polices and established a culture and climate that welcomes diversity is considered as a good prospective recruiter and employer even for non-transgender workers (Day & Greene, 2008).

The results of study support that top management commitment plays a crucial role to enhance the transgender employee commitment level. This is in congruence to Day & Schoenrade (2000). Top management should transform and articulate same vision, traits and acceptability among the managers so the same may be translated into behaviors and actions of all the employees. If, however, the same commitment level is not transferred to the lower level management they might show unwillingness to focus on transgender employees related issues (Colgan & Wright, 2011). However, transformational leadership can do the job of channelizing all the employees into the cause by intellectually stimulating them for the vision on having a non-discriminatory workplace.

The implications of the study are applicable for all small, medium and large sizes of organizations contrary to what Day & Greene (2008) found that gender identity minorities working in small organizations are more satisfied and committed.

# 9. Limitation & Future Research Directions

The limitation for the study is the time allowed for completion of thesis for the degree program. Owing to the limited time, the study is designed to be cross sectional. However, future researches based on longitudinal method may give further insight into different factors identified.

Also, as the Akhuwat Foundation is the only organization of its kind employing transgender people in significant number, the study is limited in information received from Akhuwat employees only. As many other organizations are initiating employment for transgender people, a wide scope of study covering multiple organizations may identify different dimensions to the study.

Another limitation is the researcher's access to MTF transgender employees only. The same research if conducted on FTM transgender individuals may fetch interesting facts.

Also the same study may be replicated in any for-profit corporate organization. Such a study will fetch valuable results in identifying the differences between the leadership style and its impact on workplace discrimination management.

As the transgender employees are working in an all-transgender team, future studies may be undertaken at the meso level of analysis (team level) to learn about team dynamics.

There is no FTM transgender individual employed at Akhuwat or registered with 'Khwajasira Support Program'. Therefore, the researcher could access only MTF transgender individuals who are employed at Akhuwat. Future studies if conducted on FTM transgender individuals would result in interesting outcomes. As in Pakistani culture FTM transgender persons are not abandoned or thrown out of houses. They are suppressed and mistreated but kept in houses for the reason that it is even more insulting and intolerable that females of a family are thrown out of home.

The current study is based on qualitative methods thus have built in demerits relevant to qualitative research. Further, researches could investigate these issues with robust quantitative and mix methodologies techniques although quantification might not fully capture the interactional dynamics at play in workplace.

Current study has undertaken two dimensions of workplace discrimination i.e. formal and informal discrimination at the workplace. Future researches may undertake further more dimensions of workplace discrimination i.e. perceived and real, potential and encountered.

Further, the impact of certain moderating or mediating variables could be examined to extend the research. There is a strong role of guru in lives of transgender persons in Pakistan. All the transgender employees working in Akhuwat have been referred by their guru for the job. Further research might highlight the way their guru might influence the work behaviors of transgender employees?

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## *Employing Transgender in Organization: Workplace Discrimination Challenges*

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The study explores the challenges an organization face when transgender persons are employed. One of the challenges is workplace discrimination issue against the transgender employees. Further, the role of transformational leadership has been examined in dealing with workplace discrimination issues. The study is based on qualitative analysis where in the validity and credibility of the study is ensured using data triangulation i.e. data is collected through unstructured interviews, participant observation and documents & pictures. Also, source triangulation i.e. different categories of respondents included 6 transgender employees, 6 other employees who works closely with transgender employees, 3 HR personnel, and the Executive Director Akhuwat. The study supports the role of transformational leadership in handling workplace discrimination. The values & principles, like respect and brotherhood are the core factors affecting the workplace discrimination against transgender employees. Especially, in absence of formalized HR policies and regulations, the values & principles plays a pivotal role. Such values of brotherhood and respect encourages the employees to hold a non-discriminatory organizational culture. Data shows the transgender employees are more hardworking, motivated, loyal and satisfied for merely being respected and recognized by the organization. This study of transgender employment experiences and the role of transformational leadership opens new lines of inquiry for understanding gender inequalities at work, and it builds on scholarship that combines political, social and economic approaches with transgender studies.

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